

St Michael's CE (VA) Junior School Pupil premium strategy statement

‘By God’s love we all flourish together’



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
School name	St Michael’s CE (VA) Junior School
Number of pupils in school	233 (November 2025)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	21% (November 2025)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2023/2026
Date this statement was published	November 2023
Date on which it will be reviewed	November 2026
Statement authorised by	Rowen Prigg
Pupil premium lead	Lisa Dines
Governor / Trustee lead	Jane Cregan-Bird

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£78,343
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	£78,343

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our aim is to provide targeted support to pupils funded through PPG to ensure that they reach their potential and that they make the best possible progress, both academically and socially. In addition, the school aims to raise achievement (attainment and progress) of all pupils eligible for Pupil Premium funding so that their performance is at least in line with other non-disadvantaged pupils. We recognise that some of our children are vulnerable; these will not necessarily be eligible for the PPG, but the activities outlined in this statement are also intended to support their needs.

At St Michael's CE (VA) Junior School, we endeavour to provide high standards of education, through First Quality Teaching and having high expectations of every pupil; this is rooted in our whole-school ethos. Whatever their backgrounds, our aim is for our children to flourish and be happy, healthy and empowered adults who contribute to society. Some of our funding is spent on providing higher level learning support assistants (HLTAs) to support and work with targeted groups or individual pupils eligible for PPG. Pupil Premium funding is also used to remove any 'barriers to learning' which may exist; these may include low self-esteem, poor attendance, gaps in learning or a lack of confidence. Much of our funding is used to employ our Pastoral Care Manager, who provides additional and targeted support to address the social and emotional aspects of learning for key pupils to enable them to thrive in whole class situations, have confidence in themselves and raise self-esteem.

Pupil Premium funding is used to ensure all pupils are happy and have positive learning experiences. All pupils funded through PPG should be given opportunities that they may not always have access to, through experiencing trips and participating in some of our extra-curricular provision such as our wide variety of clubs or music lessons. These experiences enhance pupils' development and can make a positive difference to their academic journey and cultural capital. The rationale for our pupil premium spending is based on the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Guide to the Pupil Premium and associated research; school leaders and governors have also received extensive training through the 'Addressing Educational Disadvantage in Schools and Colleges – The Essex Way' webinars and associated resources.

We ensure that all teaching staff are involved in the analysis of data and identification of pupils so that they are fully aware of strengths and weaknesses across the school. In line with the Education Endowment Foundation research documents 'Using your pupil premium funding effectively' and 'School Improvement Planning', we have adopted a tiered approach to Pupil Premium spending.

Tier 1 – Quality First Teaching

Ensuring an effective teacher is in front of every class, and that every teacher has access to high-quality continuing professional development is vital. Our teaching staff are skilled in formative assessment, which ensures they can provide responsive teaching.

Tier 2 – Targeted intervention

Evidence shows that targeted academic support has a positive impact on attainment – early intervention is critical. We provide a range of evidence-based, high-quality interventions and our teachers and support staff are trained to deliver these. The effectiveness of interventions is monitored by the SENCO, the Pupil Premium Lead and SLT regularly through pupil progress meetings and half-termly updates.

Tier 3 – Wider Strategies

We recognise that some children who are in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant may have non-academic barriers that may prevent them from attaining as highly as they should. Socially disadvantaged children may also have limited life experiences, compared to children who do not come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Many of our disadvantaged children and their families need social and emotional support. Difficulties faced include: housing, finance, family literacy, health issues, parental anxiety, safeguarding concerns and poor mental health. We are mindful that the current cost of living crisis may also impact on our disadvantaged pupils (and their families). Over the course of the 2024/2025 academic year, a higher percentage than ever of our children and families present with significant SEMH and environmental factors that inhibit learning and school readiness.
2	Many of our pupils who are in receipt of the pupil premium grant and other children who have been identified as being vulnerable have additional special educational needs or have low academic starting points and are in need of highly skilled teaching and intervention to accelerate their progress and reach their potential. Gaps in learning prevent pupils from achieving age-related expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Basic maths skills, early reading skills, stamina for writing and fine motor skills have been noticed as areas for development. The percentage of disadvantaged pupils in our Year 3 cohort who also have SEND has risen significantly (75%).
3	There is evidence (Essex SEND strategy lead for language and communication) that children's vocabulary and language acquisition is not as well-developed as we would expect; this hinders their ability to access the curriculum and related teaching. This has been observed in all year groups and evidenced through assessments. Vocabulary gaps, particularly in disadvantaged pupils, sometimes prevent them from accessing learning.
4	Assessments, observations and discussions with families indicate that some of our disadvantaged pupils do not receive sufficient educational support at home. Education is not a priority for some parents and, as a result, they do not support their child's learning. In some instances, poor parental engagement means that parents do not attend consultation evenings, school attendance meetings or parent workshops; they don't encourage their children to complete homework. This has a negative impact on the child's learning behaviours and their progress and attainment.

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's vocabulary is improved, and they demonstrate better oral language skills.	Assessments and observations indicate improved vocabulary and language skills.
Gaps in learning are identified and are addressed through quality first teaching, intervention and booster groups. Attainment in reading, writing and maths is improved among disadvantaged pupils.	Progress of disadvantaged pupils is accelerated so that attainment in end of Key Stage 2 assessments in reading and maths is comparable with non-disadvantaged pupils or, if not, can clearly demonstrate good progress. Pupil progress meeting discussions will show accelerated progress. Internal data will show good progress in all other year groups. Qualitative and quantitative analysis of interventions will show that they have had a positive impact on the disadvantaged children's learning and has helped in accelerating their progress.
Pastoral Care Manager will work together with children and their families to support	Pastoral Care Manager records will show that a wide range of support has been accessed which is specific to both the children's and the parent's needs.
The learning of disadvantaged pupils is not negatively affected by lack of support at home	Parents are active participants in their child's learning journey. Support and communication between school and home is strong and positive. Children will complete homework tasks. All disadvantaged children will have access to devices to ensure they can access learning. Lunchtime learning sessions will be used to support disadvantaged children to complete homework tasks. Staff will contact 'hard to reach' parents through phone calls home, if parents don't attend parents' evenings.

Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £9,897

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Develop pupils' language capabilities	Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2 – Recommendation 1 (Educational Endowment Foundation) https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks2 The Pupil Premium - How schools are spending the funding successfully to maximise achievement (Ofsted) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/413197/The Pupil Premium -How schools are spending the funding.pdf Promote high quality dialogue in the classroom to enable pupils to develop their thinking and use of language. English subject leader to undertake oracy CPG and cascade training to staff. Extend pupils' vocabulary by explicitly teaching new words, providing exposure to new vocabulary and give children the opportunity to use new language in context. Read, Write Inc. has been introduced as an intervention across the school. This will improve pupils' decoding and spelling skills, which will enable them to access new vocabulary. English subject leader to invest in a range of high quality texts In school evidence: Speech and Language Link and RWI assessments Speech and Language U.K. Teacher feedback	2 & 3
Target teaching and support by accurately assessing	Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2– Recommendation 6 (Educational Endowment Foundation) https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks2	2 & 3

pupils' needs	Use high quality feedback and assessment so that pupil needs are identified, and teaching adjusted accordingly Teaching and Learning Toolkit – Feedback (Educational Endowment Foundation) https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/feedback Evidence suggests that providing high-quality feedback has a high impact on learning outcomes. New tracking and assessment system (Insight) will allow us to identify small step progress. Ordinarily available Essex County Council documents 'Essex recommended assessment for identifying pupils' needs' EP maths intervention Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher have started a 'writing project' which will be supported by the English subject leader Maths subject leader has identified areas of the curriculum that should be taught in more depth to ensure pupils have a solid mathematical foundation to build upon In school evidence: Year 3 baseline in October 2025 to provide accurate assessment data Bespoke writing curriculum developed and implemented Gaps in knowledge will be identified and addressed in intervention groups 'Live' feedback will ensure that misconceptions/gaps are rectified Teachers will use the objective tracking feature on Insight to track back to identify the concepts that pupils have found challenging	
Continued professional development for all staff to support children's emotional wellbeing	Teaching and Learning Toolkit – Social and Emotional Learning (Education Endowment Foundation) https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning Evidence suggests that children from disadvantaged backgrounds have, on average, weaker Social and emotional learning skills at all ages than their more affluent peers. These skills are likely to influence a range of outcomes for pupils: lower SEL skills are linked with poorer mental health and lower academic attainment. All staff to receive 'Emotional Regulation' training from Steve Phillips Headteacher to complete 'Advanced senior mental health training'	1 & 2

	Pastoral Care Manager to implement any wellbeing strategies that would benefit children Pastoral care manager to signpost families to agencies/support that would benefit their child's mental wellbeing In school evidence: Bespoke 'pastoral windscreen' developed to signpost families to the most appropriate agencies/support Attachment Aware training for all staff Trauma Perceptive Practice training for all staff 'Stay' project Teachers' record keeping (CPOMS) Pupil Progress meetings Children will be more able to access learning within the classroom	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £21,739

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
HLTA funding for 'key worker' support and small group learning interventions	Teaching and Learning Toolkit – Small Group Tuition (Education Endowment Foundation) https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition Studies in England have shown that pupils eligible for the pupil premium grant typically receive additional benefits from small group tuition. HLTAs work alongside disadvantaged and vulnerable children within the classroom and take small group interventions and booster groups to support better outcomes. 'Key worker' scheme has been implemented. Each HLTA has been assigned a group of children who we have identified as vulnerable. They will provide regular 'light touch' support for both academic and pastoral matters. In school evidence: Vulnerable children will receive regular light touch support	1,2,3,4

	Small group or 1:1 support by a qualified teacher to address gaps in learning for the autumn term (directed by the class teachers) HLTAs will identify any barriers to learning (either academic, social or emotional) and keep records of any action Records of actions will be shared with class teachers Deputy Headteacher will monitor pupils Actions will be discussed at pupil progress meetings	
Use high quality structured interventions to help pupils who are struggling with their reading	Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2– Recommendation 7 (Educational Endowment Foundation) https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks2 Evidence suggests: ‘There is a strong and consistent body of evidence demonstrating the benefit of structured interventions for pupils who are struggling with their literacy.’ 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. Evidence suggests that early reading intervention impacts attainment in Years 5 and 6; therefore, children’s phonic and reading ability is assessed on entry and assessment data is used to signpost the most appropriate support. Read, Write Inc.is used widely in Years 3 and 4 to help children learn to read more fluently and at speed. Fresh Start is used in Years 5 and 6 to help children develop their comprehension skills and improve vocabulary and spelling. In school evidence: Read, Write Inc. progress data (evidenced through assessment) Fresh Start progress data (evidenced through assessment) Year 2 phonics check (data received from Galleywood Infant School) Year 3 baseline teacher assessment Teacher Assessment End of year data analysis Termly pupil progress meetings	2 & 3

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

Budgeted cost: £46,707

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Pastoral Care Manager: To provide social and emotional support for our disadvantaged and vulnerable children and their families	The Pupil Premium - How schools are spending the funding successfully to maximise achievement (Ofsted) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/413197/The_Pupil_Premium_-_How_schools_are_spending_the_funding.pdf Our Pastoral Care Manager supports disadvantaged and vulnerable children and their families, leads small group interventions (e.g. Zones of Regulation), arranges attendance and staffing at breakfast club, organises extended schools provision, liaises with outside agencies, makes regular referrals to mental health services and is a designated safeguard lead. Social and emotional support is also offered by external agencies (such as YMCA etc.) which is funded through the Pupil Premium Grant Our Pastoral Care Manager has monthly DSL supervision and access to ad-hoc supervision to discuss safeguarding concerns (as an alternative to calling the consultation line). We offer mini-mindfulness sessions to support with children's mental well-being.	1 & 4
To provide a Breakfast Club for disadvantaged pupils	Evaluation of breakfast clubs in schools with high levels of deprivation (Department for Education) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/603946/Evaluation_of_Breakfast_Clubs_-_Final_Report.pdf HLTAs and LSAs provide support at Breakfast Club and Lunchtime Learning sessions. Evidence suggests that Breakfast Clubs provide disadvantaged children with a healthy breakfast and structured morning routine (which both impact positively on concentration within the classroom) and also provide children with positive social benefits. Our Breakfast Club provision is offered to all disadvantaged pupils and is well-attended. On average, 22 pupils access this provision each day.	1 & 4
To improve parental engagement with their child's learning by	Teaching and Learning Toolkit – Parental Engagement (Educational Endowment Foundation) https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit	1 & 2

holding open mornings/ afternoons, parent workshops, parent voice, etc.	Evidence suggests that parental engagement has a positive impact on average of 4 months' additional progress on learning. In school evidence: Whole school informal open afternoon Year 3 open mornings in the autumn term Invitation to special lunches: fathers' day, mothers' day, etc. Open invitation to all parents to attend regular church services Open invitation to all parents to attend weekly celebration assemblies Invites to parents to support trips and visits	
To provide financial support to fund extra-curricular activities and school provisions	EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium 'Menu of approaches') states, <i>'Extracurricular activities are an important part of education. These approaches may increase engagement in learning but it is important to consider how increased engagement will be translated into improved outcomes'</i> https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/staging/documents/pupil_premium_menu_of_approaches_v1.0.0.pdf We contribute £12 per child per visit for any trips or enrichment activities. We make a contribution towards breaktime snacks and often provide breakfast to those children who haven't eaten before school (who don't attend Breakfast Club). We provide free uniform and P.E. kit to those children whose families are unable to meet the costs of this.	1 & 4

Total budgeted cost: £82,555

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

Autumn 2025

Our end of KS2 SATs showed that 73% of our disadvantaged children achieved age-related expectations in reading, writing and maths (combined national average was 62%). The percentage of disadvantaged children achieved age-related expectations in reading was 82% (against a national average of 75% for all pupils); this indicates that our strategy to improve the attainment for our vulnerable children is working.

Last year, we identified that writing outcomes should be a priority for St Michael's and, to address this, we developed a bespoke writing curriculum. Grammar objectives have now been assigned to specific year groups; this ensures that there is a progressive and cohesive approach to the teaching of writing. Objectives on Insight have been updated to reflect the changes. 73% of our PPG pupils achieved age-related expectations in writing, which is slightly above the national average.

Quality First Teaching remains a priority across the school, with disadvantaged pupils being a focus in monitoring. This, along with a high quality and well-planned curriculum, has ensured that all pupils have access to a high standard of Quality First Teaching. Pupil progress meetings have been held with all class teachers and disadvantaged pupils have been made a priority within these meetings, carefully considering their learning needs ensures that additional support is identified and put in place.

Over the course of this three-year impact statement, we have implemented many successful strategies to support children in receipt of the PPG and their families; these strategies will be continued, including (but not limited to): Read, Write Inc., Fresh Start, Breakfast Club, data analysis, small group interventions, attendance, developing stronger relationships with the adults who care for our pupils, staff training to address areas of need and work with external agencies (amongst other things).

Autumn 2024

Children's language skills are developing. Teachers use a range of strategies to introduce new vocabulary and to ensure children's understanding and use of language is improving. The percentage of PPG pupils who achieved age-related expectations in the end of KS2 reading assessment rose significantly (an increase of 46%).

Insight is being used effectively by all class teachers to assess against objectives and track progress. End of year data (2024 KS2 SATs) shows that the attainment of children in receipt of the PPG grant has risen in all subjects, compared to the 2023 end of year data. Read, Write Inc. interventions are still being delivered; over the last academic year, many children have completed the program and children new to the school in Year 3 have all been assessed and, where appropriate, are now taking part in the RWI interventions. Children in Years 5 and 6 who have been assessed as having poor phonic knowledge are taking part in the Fresh Start intervention

program. We hold pupil progress meetings twice a year and the progress and attainment of children in receipt of the PPG grant is discussed before any other contextual group; this ensures that SLT are aware of any barriers or concerns that the class teacher has in relation to the academic progress or pastoral needs of our disadvantaged children.

Similarly to last year, the workload of our Pastoral Care Manager has increased. She plays a vital role in the well-being and academic progress and attainment of our children and we will continue to invest in this area.

In order to improve parental engagement, we have held different events where parents are invited into school. These include: mothers' day lunch, father's day lunch, Year 3 open afternoon and Year 4 open afternoon. All of the events were very well attended and were much appreciated by the adults that came along to eat or work alongside their children. We will be planning more opportunities for parents to come into school. As we want parents to be involved in their child's learning, children who are taking part in the Read, Write Inc. intervention take home books and we ask that they can share these with an adult at home. We have supplied all children in Year 6 with CGP Study Guides to provide homework and revision support – previous feedback from parents has been that they can't remember, or don't understand, the concepts their child is learning; these guides provide easy-to-understand explanations and visual reminders so that parents can, where appropriate, provide support at home. We have adapted our bi-weekly newsletter to make it more user-friendly – it can now be read on a mobile device (which is what most of our parents read their emails on) and we provide timely information about lunch menus, PPA days, etc. in order to improve communication.

Although attendance has not been a focus over the last academic year, it is an area in which we continue to implement best practice. Our recent IDSR shows that our percentage of absences over the 2023/2024 academic year are in the lowest 20% nationally.

Autumn 2023

Language acquisition and oracy skills remains a focus for the next academic year. Average scaled scores in the 2023 End of Key Stage 2 assessments showed that disadvantaged pupils are not attaining as highly as the pupils who are not eligible for the pupil premium grant.

Data analysis demonstrates that there are still gaps in learning for many of our disadvantaged pupils. We have invested in a new tracking system (Insight Tracking) and this is now being used effectively by all teachers to track progress and attainment in all subjects. Gaps in learning are more easily identifiable. Teacher discussion and assessments show that there are many gaps in early reading skills which, in turn, impacts on the children's ability to write effectively. In order to address this, we have invested in Read, Write Inc. All children in the school have been assessed using the RWI materials and there are now targeted intervention groups three times per week for all children who have been identified as needing further support. Ofsted (November 2022) stated, *'Disadvantaged pupils... are well supported in the school.'*

The workload of our Pastoral Care Manager has continued to grow over the last academic year. She operates an 'open door' policy and has supported many of our disadvantaged pupils academically, socially and emotionally. Furthermore, we have found that many of our families are now reaching out to her for help and advice (e.g. parenting support, external agency support, medical support, financial support, etc.). In order to address her increased workload, we have instigated a 'key worker' scheme where our HLTAs have taken over some of the light touch pastoral support that would have been supplied by our Pastoral Care Manager. Breakfast Club for our disadvantaged pupils is popular. All children who are eligible for the pupil premium grant are invited to Breakfast Club five days per week. There are approximately 20 pupils who attend every day, while other children access the provision when needed. Ofsted (November 2022) stated, *'Leaders create strong relationships with parents. Leaders engage with a variety of external agencies to support pupils' and families' needs. The school's pastoral care manager provides valuable in-house support for pupils and families.'*

Attendance of our pupil premium pupils has been a focus for the past three years. We have put many strategies in place to track and challenge poor attendance. The attendance of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium grant is now above the national average for this group and it is not a cause for concern. However, we will continue to implement the approaches that we have been using to ensure that attendance remains above the national average.