

Pupil premium strategy statement – St James C of E 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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	200
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	23% (27%)
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)	2024/25 2025/2026
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2026
Statement authorised by	Jane Cook
Pupil premium lead	Scott Clark
Governor / Trustee lead	Jeanette Knowles

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£84,830
Pupil 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>	£84,830
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Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

'Everyone is loved' at St James and this core value underpins every decision that we make as a school. We serve a richly diverse community of children and families, which includes children from Gypsy Romany Traveller backgrounds and those with parents who serve in the Armed Forces.

It is our intention that all children leave St James with a wealth of knowledge that they can carry with them for life; an endless love of learning and are ready to flourish in the wider world. The purpose of our strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve that goal building resilience, confidence and self-belief

Much of what we outline in this strategy will support all our pupils, regardless of their socio-economic status, because quality first teaching is at the centre of our provision. Where children are supported to reach their potential through high expectations, yet a nurturing careful approach, they will flourish and grow into confident and empowered individuals who can make a difference to the world around them.

We recognise that it is a privilege to be part of this journey with our pupils and we embrace the opportunity to share and offer our 'love'.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Attendance gap: Our disadvantaged pupils' attendance throughout the last academic year was 2.1% below the national disadvantaged average. Our disadvantaged pupils' attendance has typically been 3% below our non-disadvantaged peers.

2	Attainment gap in Reading, Writing, and Maths between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils within the academy. This is particularly evident in the current Year 6 cohort but is prevalent in the other year groups across the school.
3	Disadvantaged pupils with SEND (approx. 12%) attain significantly lower than disadvantaged peers without SEND.
4	Many of our disadvantaged pupils display a limited general knowledge and understanding of the wider world compared to their non-disadvantaged peers.
5	Many of our disadvantaged pupils come from complex or disrupted family environments, whereby a number of pupils and their families have some adverse childhood experiences.

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
1. Continue to improve the overall attendance of all pupils and reduce the number of persistently absent disadvantaged pupils.	Increase the attendance of the disadvantaged pupils so that it continues to improve and closes the gap to national figures. Reduce the rate of persistent absenteeism
2. Make rapid progress towards closing the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils through quality first teaching and targeted intervention.	Year 6 disadvantaged pupils achieve outcomes in line with or exceeding national disadvantaged averages and in line with their non-disadvantaged peers at school.
3. Improve the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils with SEND through targeted support and intervention.	SEND disadvantaged pupils show measurable progress through SEND plans and assessment data (
4. Through quality first teaching, improve the amount of general knowledge and facts that our disadvantaged pupils are able to retain and recall.	Pupils can demonstrate through their work (particularly in quizzes and assessments) and discussions, a wider general knowledge.
5. Make sure that children from these environments are supported emotionally and have calm, consistent learning environments to flourish in, whilst also having a voice within school and receive additional academic support where necessary.	For pupils to state that they feel safe, listen to and valued at school. Classrooms and staff provide consistent learning environments so that specific pupils achieve their potential.

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: £15,600

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Continue to embed and adapt our adopted curriculum (Primary Knowledge Curriculum)	Evidence indicates that high quality teaching is the most powerful way for schools to improve attainment, especially for socio-economically disadvantaged pupils. The EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit highlights that high-quality teaching has the greatest impact on disadvantaged pupils' outcomes. This curriculum helps to build teacher knowledge and pedagogical expertise. The PKC curriculum is ambitious and carefully designed and constructed to build pupil knowledge over time.	2, 4
Ongoing leadership and teacher collaboration to further sequence the curriculum ensuring progression and challenge, especially for the highest attaining disadvantaged pupils.	Research by EEF on Curriculum Planning supports well-sequenced curricula to improve retention and knowledge	2, 4
Targeted use of experienced staff to offer mentoring and guidance for new to school staff and ECTs to maintain teaching quality and continuity.	The EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit highlights that high-quality teaching has the greatest impact on disadvantaged pupils' outcomes. Effective continuous professional development (CPD) has the potential to improve teaching and school leadership: it is proven to have a significant effect on pupils' learning outcomes (Zuccollo & Fletcher-Wood, 2020).	2,3,4
Training for all staff on adaptive teaching strategies to meet	The EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit highlights that high-quality teaching has the greatest impact on disadvantaged pupils' outcomes.	2,3,4

diverse needs, including SEND and disadvantaged pupils.		
Continuation and enhancement of phonics teaching and reading interventions linked to curriculum texts to build vocabulary and fluency.	The EEF Phonics Guidance Report evidences strong phonics teaching accelerates reading progress for disadvantaged pupils.	2,3
Continue to purchase online educational packages (such as White Rose, TTRS, Spelling Shed) to support children at home and school.	Having a mastery approach to teaching mathematics helps to prevent gaps in children's knowledge from forming through direct instruction where necessary and class teachers ensuring that pupils understand units of work before 'moving on' https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotionallearning	2

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

Budgeted cost: £44,980

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Targeted TA deployment to support pupils in the classroom and withdraw them for 1:1 or small group interventions.	Teaching assistants have a positive impact on pupil outcomes when deployed well – delivering interventions that they have been trained to deliver or targeting individual children or groups of children to reach specific goals and aims. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/teaching-assistantinterventions For those children with gaps in their phonetical knowledge, it is crucial that their phonics learning does not stop because they are now in Key Stage 2. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics	2, 3, 4, 5
Continue to embed the Birmingham Toolkit to support staff in identifying small next steps for	The Combined Birmingham SEN Toolkit focuses on attainment in speaking and listening, reading, writing and maths. It is a tool that supports schools in identifying specific levels of need and ability for pupils with their literacy and maths skills (including speaking and listening).	3, 5

pupils, whilst ensuring interventions are well-targeted and impactful.	Research by EEF on Oral Language Interventions shows strong impact on disadvantaged pupils' language skills	
Plan in opportunities for Pupil Premium children to take the lead in public speaking (Concerts, collective worships, class presentations).	https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions The EEF outlines the benefits of improved oracy.	5
One-to-one tuition for highest-need disadvantaged SEND pupils where diagnostic assessment indicates intensive individualised instruction Teachers/SENCo oversee plans and ensure classroom links.	One-to-one tuition evidence — up to ~5 months' additional progress when well-implemented; most effective when explicitly linked to classroom teaching. EEF: One to one tuition	3
Learning mentor supporting children and families who are disengaged with learning and school.	Social and emotional learning (SEL) interventions seek to improve pupils' decision-making skills, interaction with others and their self-management of emotions, rather than focusing directly on the academic or cognitive elements of learning. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning	1, 5
Purchased PE hub to support the quality teaching of PE to increase engagement from Pupil Premium	Pupil premium pupils demonstrated that they were finding PE lessons significantly more challenging than their peers. A well-structured scheme with adaptation suggestions included purchased to support the teaching of PE.	1, 5

pupils to be more in-line with their peers.		
Rigorous diagnostic assessment and responsive formative assessment cycles (quick checks, address misconceptions same day) to identify gaps for PP+SEND pupils and to measure intervention effectiveness termly.	Formative assessment and diagnostic assessment central to effective adaptive teaching and intervention selection. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/send	2, 3, 4

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

Budgeted cost: £ 24,250

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Deploy a learning mentor to respond to and support children with their emotional wellbeing.	Social and emotional learning (SEL) interventions seek to improve pupils' decision-making skills, interaction with others and their self-management of emotions, rather than focusing directly on the academic or cognitive elements of learning. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/educationevidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotionallelearning	5
Timetable opportunities for learning mentor and members of SLT to work with families	EEF – Working with parents to support children's learning guidance report. - There is an established link between the home learning environments at all ages and children's performance at school. - Schools and parents have a shared priority to deliver the best outcomes for their children. - Tips, support, and resources can make home activities more effective—for example, where they prompt longer and more frequent conversations during book reading. - Well-designed school communications can be effective for improving attainment and a range of other outcomes, such as attendance. - Communication should be two-way:	3

requiring additional support.	consulting with parents about how they can be involved is likely to be valuable and increase the effectiveness of homeschool relationships.	
Use the 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidance to employ an attendance strategy	Good school attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage 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 those meeting the expected standard. Moreover, the overall absence rate of pupils not meeting the expected standard was higher than among those meeting the higher standard (4.7% compared to 2.7%) For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf	1
Maintain the increased parental engagement and target those harder to reach parents directly to improve further.	Parental engagement has a positive impact on average of 4 months' additional progress. It is crucial to consider how to engage with all parents to avoid widening attainment gaps. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement	1, 5
Whole school and individual staff training led by the SENCO to improve the provision for the double disadvantaged pupils.	Children eligible for FSM are over-represented in every category of SEND and mostly so in 'Moderate Learning Difficulties', 'Severe Learning Difficulties' and 'Social, Emotional and Mental Health'. https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/double-disadvantage/	3
Fund for school trips, clubs, food and uniform.	Enabling Pupil Premium Pupils to attend residential and trips is essential to their academic and social learning. It is important for pupils' well-being and self-esteem to have the same uniform/equipment as their peers. Giving all pupils enriched activities will support their general knowledge. It is crucial that children are well-fed to enable them to access the curriculum.	1, 5

Contingency fund for acute issues.	Through our prior experiences we have identified a need to set a small amount aside to be able to respond quickly to needs that arise unexpectedly throughout the year.	
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Total budgeted cost:

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Intended outcome	Evaluation
Improve the overall attendance of all pupils and reduce the number of persistently absent Pupil Premium pupils.	All pupil attendance rose from 93.8% to 94.8% attendance in the previous academic year demonstrating a relative improvement in relation to National figures. However, despite a small improvement of 0.2% on the year before for children in receipt of pupil premium funding, that is a relative decline in comparison to National figures. So far this academic year, 93.2% is the attendance figure for pupil premium pupils and 95.3% for all pupils, which represents year on year improvement.
Improve writing and maths attainment among Pupil Premium pupils.	At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2025, 63% of our disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths combined, which represents a huge year on year increase of 30% and in relation to national figures, a significant rise. It also demonstrated a narrowing of the attainment gap between the disadvantaged pupils and the none disadvantaged pupils. This data does not reflect the whole school picture, in that elsewhere in the school the attainment gap remains, although it is narrowing. It suggests that our interventions are having a longer-term impact, which is positive. We do however recognise our need to ensure accurate assessment of identifying pupils' needs continues to be an area of focus.
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils, particularly Pupil Premium pupils.	Pupil voice outcomes outline that there is a decrease in pupils who identify that they feel unsafe at St James, and this trend is reflected in the pupil premium pupils. Whilst there is an increase in percentage of pupils who enjoy school, lunch times in

	particular remains an area of focus for improvement, with many pupils highlighting them as their least favourite part of their school day.
IDENTIFY specific needs of all pupils with additional barriers to learning. Plan and deliver appropriate interventions resulting in rapid progress towards individualised goals.	The quality of interventions for all pupils has improved over the past twelve months and continues to do so. Children's individual education plans demonstrate that all staff are aware of the next small steps in learning for their pupils and are planning to meet those needs. The children are continuing to make good progress towards the expected standard.

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

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

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**

Pupil Premium funding for service children is allocated to provide a well-staffed and structured lunchtime environment that supports calm relaxation and positive social interaction. Additionally, specific pupils are supported by the learning mentor and Senco to regulate emotions and discuss calming strategies when feeling dysregulated. The learning mentor runs a club once a fortnight to 'touch base' with and maintain strong relations with the service children. Finally, as a school, we ensure that pupils whose parents serve are represented at key milestones throughout a calendar year and during any community events.

The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils

The pupils feel valued (which can be challenging when moving to new schools), and have a safe environment to thrive in. This leads to good outcomes and demonstrable progress for individual pupils.

Further information (optional)

Use this space to provide any further information about your pupil premium strategy. For example, about your strategy planning, implementation and evaluation, or other activity that you are delivering to support disadvantaged pupils that is not dependent on pupil premium funding.