

Pupil premium strategy statement – St John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School

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.

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	1111
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	29.5%
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)	2025-2026
Date this statement was published	
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 26
Statement authorised by	Dympna Lennon
Pupil premium lead	Kausar Ali
Governor / Trustee lead	Owen McColgan

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£333,160
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year <i>Recovery premium received in academic year 2023/24 cannot be carried forward beyond August 31, 2024.</i>	£ 0
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>	££333160

Statement of intent

At **St John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School**, we are committed to ensuring that disadvantaged pupils receive the same high-quality education and breadth of opportunity as their peers. We recognise the unique challenges faced by these pupils and aim to remove barriers to learning so that they can thrive academically, socially and personally.

Our strategy is designed to ensure that disadvantaged pupils engage fully in school life, benefit from quality first teaching, and feel empowered to pursue ambitious pathways beyond their time at St John Fisher Catholic school. Guided by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) tiered approach, our strategy focuses on:

- **Quality of Teaching and Learning:** Ensuring every pupil has access to consistently high-quality classroom practice. particularly disadvantaged pupils, have access to excellent teaching, high-quality feedback, and evidence-informed strategies across the curriculum.
- **Targeted Academic Support:** Providing tailored interventions, delivered both internally and through external partners, to help pupils achieve positive outcomes
- **Wider Strategies:** Enriching pupils' experiences and broadening their understanding of the world and opportunities available to them beyond school.
- **Parental and Community Engagement:** Actively involve parents in their child's learning through programmes such as coffee evenings, workshops, and regular meetings, ensuring they feel informed, supported, and confident in helping their child at home. with families and the wider community, we aim to create a collaborative approach that reinforces learning and promotes positive outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

Through these principles, we strive to create an inclusive environment where all disadvantaged pupils can achieve success and flourish.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p>Attendance and persistent absence</p> <p>Persistent absence remains one of the most significant barriers for disadvantaged pupils. Many families experience complex social circumstances that contribute to irregular attendance. For pupils who already enter below age-related expectations, lost learning time further widens existing gaps and impacts engagement, progress, and outcomes.</p>
2	<p>Attainment</p> <p>Despite some improvement, there continues to be a substantial progress gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. Internal assessment data shows that PP pupils make slower progress across core subjects, and external outcomes mirror this trend. Without sustained high-quality teaching and targeted intervention, these gaps risk becoming entrenched over time.</p>
3	<p>Literacy</p> <p>Weak literacy skills remain a key barrier for many disadvantaged pupils at St John Fisher. Pupils often enter with reading ages significantly below their chronological age, reducing access to the wider curriculum, hindering comprehension of examination content, and limiting their ability to produce extended writing. This challenge compounds across subjects and has a direct impact on overall achievement.</p>
4	<p>Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH)</p> <p>A higher proportion of PP pupils present with social, emotional, and mental health needs. These challenges can manifest as behaviour concerns, low confidence, or disengagement from learning. Exclusion data indicates that disadvantaged pupils are disproportionately represented, highlighting the need for robust, targeted SEMH provision.</p>
5	<p>Enrichment and aspiration.</p> <p>Disadvantaged pupils are less likely to participate in enrichment and extracurricular activities. Limited access to broader experiences reduces aspiration, narrows cultural capital, and can negatively affect post-16 progression routes. Proactive intervention is essential to ensure PP pupils benefit from a rich and varied school experience.</p>
6	<p>Family and community engagement</p> <p>Engaging some families in their child's education remains challenging. A number of disadvantaged parents face barriers—such as limited time, confidence, or external pressures—that make it difficult for them to support learning at home or maintain regular communication with school. Strengthening these relationships is crucial for improving outcomes.</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
Attendance and Persistent Absence Reduce persistent absence for PP pupils to be in line with national figures. Increase overall attendance of disadvantaged pupils to close the gap with non-PP peers. Improve parental engagement in attendance process.	PP persistent absence reduced by at least 5-10% over the academic year. Attendance gap between PP and NPP reduced by 40% Increased parental engagement evidenced through attendance at meetings, phone calls and follow-up actions.
Attainment Improved progress across core subjects for PP pupils with a higher proportion of PP pupils achieving expected and higher standards.	2025/26 KS4 outcomes: PP progress scores improve year-on-year and move closer to national benchmarks. Gap in expected standard attainment between PP and non-PP pupils narrowed by at least 10 percentage. At least 50–60% of PP pupils meet individual termly progress targets. Interventions show measurable impact on assessment outcomes.
Literacy Improved reading ages and literacy skills for PP pupils. Enhanced ability to access curriculum demands and extended writing	PP pupils' reading ages increase by an average of 9-12 months over the year. Improved literacy scores across subjects, evidenced through internal assessments
Social, Emotional and mental Health (SEMH) To reduce behaviour incidents and exclusions Improve wellbeing, resilience and engagement.	PP pupils fixed-term exclusion reduced by 30-40% Increased engagement with SEMH interventions (regular attendance, positive feedback from pupils and families). Student voice shows improved confidence, resilience, and sense of belonging.
Enrichment and aspiration Increased participation in enrichment and extracurricular activities Improved aspirational for post-16 progress	PP uptake of clubs, trips and enrichment increases to match non-PP participation. Positive progression into post-16 pathways: reduced NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) risk. Positive trends in pupil surveys and interviews showing increased awareness of post-16 pathways and career options.
Parental engagement	Increased parental attendance at workshops and events

Improvement parental involvement in learning, behaviour and attendance.	Improved frequency and quality of communication with hard-to-reach families
Stronger relationship with families	Improved family engagement impacting attendance, behaviour and outcomes.

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: £: £20000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Embed the use of Step lab to strengthen instructional coaching and enhance the quality, consistency, and precision of feedback provided to staff, directly supporting the development of Quality First Teaching (QFT) across the school.</p>	<p>Research strongly supports the use of structured observation and feedback to improve classroom teaching. For example, Gore et al. (2017) found in a large randomised controlled trial that a structured cycle of observation, targeted feedback, and professional dialogue led to significant improvements in teaching quality. Similarly, Harris and Sass (2014) showed that practice-based professional development—where teachers receive feedback and coaching directly linked to their classroom practice—has a far greater impact on improving teaching than traditional training models. Together, these studies provide a clear evidence base for approaches like Step lab, which use structured feedback and coaching to enhance teacher practice.</p>	<p>2,3</p>
<p>Deliver CPD in adaptive teaching strategies with rigorous tracking of progress that improve outcomes for disadvantaged (PP) learners, supported by instructional coaching cycles with explicit PP goals. Monitor impact through learning walks, work scrutiny, and PP student voice panels.</p>	<p>According to EEF’s “Effective Professional Development” guidance, high-quality PD should include mechanisms such as goal-setting, feedback, rehearsal of techniques, and revisiting prior learning — all of which support sustained improvement in classroom practice. EEF+2EEF+2</p> <p>Furthermore, EEF highlights that well-designed PD can be a powerful lever for improving teaching quality and raising attainment, especially for disadvantaged pupils.</p>	<p>2,3</p>
<p>Improving literacy in all subject areas in line with recommendations in the EEF Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools guidance.</p>	<p>The EEF’s Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools guidance emphasises that structured interventions targeting reading comprehension, vocabulary, and oracy can significantly improve attainment, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Evidence shows that developing disciplinary</p>	<p>2,3,5</p>

	literacy and addressing the “word gap” supports learning across all subjects, including maths and English, and enhances cultural capital. (EEF, 2023)	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: ££35000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Whole school reading strategy with library engagement to carry out the guided reading programme for students that are below average to enable students to have access to powerful literacy and read, write and speak like experts.	Reading comprehension strategies can have a positive impact on pupils’ ability to understand a text, and this is particularly the case when interventions are delivered over a shorter timespan: Reading comprehension strategies Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	2,3,5
Partnerships with Parents ensure parents are aware of their child’s needs and to outline ways in which they can support their child at home	Evidence from the EEF Parental Engagement guidance shows that effective parental engagement can lead to moderate improvements in pupil outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Involving parents through structured programmes, regular communication, and school-based workshops helps improve	1,2,4,6

	attendance, behaviour, and academic achievement. (EEF, 2020)	
To provide support for our disadvantaged students in participating in independent revision after school, communicating regularly with families and carers	Students achieve better outcomes when taught how to revise effectively using cognitive science methods which improves student's knowledge retention over time ultimately achieving better GCSE outcomes.	2,3, 5, 6

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

Budgeted cost: £ 278160

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Attendance officer to track, monitor and improve the attendance of some of our most vulnerable students.	Tracking and monitoring attendance allows key stake holders to identify patterns and attendance issues early allowing action to be taken to address the issues in a timely manner.	1,2,4

<p>Embedding principles of good practice set out in EEF Parental engagement report:</p> <p>Parental workshops to have a better understanding of link between attendance and outcomes (Chatham Town initiatives).</p>	<p>Enhancing attendance and monitoring systems and communication with parents, sending frequent comms home with praise EEF Teaching and Learning tool kit:</p> <p>Parental engagement can have a positive impact on reducing the attainment gap</p>	1,2,4,5,6
<p>Careers advice and intervention to provide students with goals and a clear informed path to get there.</p> <p>Careers provision for PP students will be closely monitored, ensuring that every PP student receives at least one meaningful employer encounter, one guidance interview, and access to post-16 transition support</p>	<p>Career guidance promotes positive well-being, including recognising strengths, a focus on the future, setting achievable goals, and building a social identity through work.</p> <p>It enhances linkage of academic and career experiences and thus, improves career preparation.</p> <p>There is a strong, statistically significant relationship between participation in career development activities and more positive attitudes towards schooling.</p>	2,4,5
<p>Opportunities for increasing numbers of students taking leadership roles to promote the school ethos, achieved via the SJF School Leadership Programme .</p>	<p>'Promote an ethos of attainment for all pupils, rather than stereotyping disadvantaged pupils as a group with less potential to succeed. (p.10)</p> <p>https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/473974/DFE-RR411_Supporting_the_attainment_of_disadvantaged_pupils.pdf</p>	2,4,5

Total budgeted cost: £ £ 333160

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2024-2025 academic year.

Measure	2023-2024 NPP	2023-2024 PP	2024-2025 NPP	2024-2025 PP
Attainment 8	40.7	26.8	42.9	32.4
English A8	40.2	29.6	41.3	35.8
Maths A8	41.2	29.1	43.3	35.2
EBAAC A8	3.79	2.41	4.19	3.13
Open A8	4.11	2.55	4.28	3.03
Eng+ Maths 4+	57.9%	36.4%	55%	38.9%
Eng+ Maths 5+	31.7%	16.4%	35.7%	24%
% EBBAC 4+	7.1%	1.8%	6.2%	1.9%
% EBAAC 5+	3.2%	0%	3.9%	0%

Across nearly all measures, outcomes for disadvantaged (PP) students have improved from 2023–24 to 2024–25, reflecting a narrowing of the attainment gap and more consistent performance across subjects. **Attainment 8** for PP students has increased from **26.8 to 32.4**, a greater rise than seen for non-PP pupils (NPP: 40.7 → 42.9). In core subjects, there are clear gains: **English A8** has grown from **29.6 to 35.8**, and **Maths A8** from **29.1 to 35.2**, indicating that targeted interventions in these areas are proving effective. **EBACC A8** has also improved for PP students, rising from **2.41 to 3.13**, demonstrating stronger performance across a broad academic curriculum. **Open A8** has increased from **2.55 to 3.03**, showing positive progress in other subjects as well.

Key headline measures further illustrate this progress. The proportion of PP students achieving **Grade 4+ in English and maths** has risen from **36.4% to 38.9%**, and those achieving **Grade 5+** have increased from **16% to 24%**, helping to close the gap with their non-PP peers. The **Average EBACC APS** for PP students has grown from **2.41 to 3.13**. While the percentage of PP students achieving **EBACC 5+** remains at **0%**, there is a slight improvement in **EBACC 4+** (1.8% → 1.9%), indicating gradual progress in accessing the full EBACC curriculum. Overall, the data demonstrates consistent improvement for disadvantaged learners in 2024–25, both in absolute terms and relative to their peers, highlighting the positive impact of targeted support strategies.

Looking ahead, we will continue to build on these gains. To ensure all pupils benefit fully from our curriculum, regardless of background, we will maintain our focus on **attendance, high-quality CPD, and targeted academic support**, equipping teachers to deliver highly effective lessons and helping disadvantaged pupils achieve further progress in 2025–26.

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
Higher Level Maths Achievement Work Group	MEI
Cambridge-access programmes	Cambridge University

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

<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>
We had 1 number of service pupil premium students. As this represented less than 0.1% of our total cohort and so are not statistically significant, we made the decision to manage spending for these students as part of our main pupil premium strategy.
The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils
See above for general pupil premium impact review.