

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (2025-2026, 2026-2027, 2027-2028 academic year) 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 Catholic Primary, Elswick
Number of pupils in school	222
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	61.7%
Academic years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2025-2026 2026-2027 2027-2028
Date this statement was published	September 2026
Statement authorised by	Charlotte Chapman
Pupil premium lead	Charlotte Chapman
Governor / Trustee lead	Belinda Ward

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£197,708
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£197,708

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Demography and School Context

St. Michael's is an average sized primary school.

Children join the school from several different nursery settings as well as from St Michael's nursery.

The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is well above average at 61.7%.

The proportion of pupils who access SEN support close to national average at 13.9%.

Some year groups include a high proportion of pupils with additional needs, with the highest being in the current Year 2 and Year 3 cohorts.

The proportion of pupils with an Education Health Care Plan is higher than that of the national average.

The proportion of pupils who come from minority ethnic groups, including those who do not have English as their first language, is higher than national average.

The school is situated in an area where the level of social deprivation is high.

When making decisions about using Pupil Premium funding it is important to consider the context of the school and the subsequent challenges faced, as well as research generated by the EEF. Common barriers to learning for disadvantaged children can be: less support at home, weak language and communication skills, lack of confidence, limited experiences outside of school, additional educational needs and attendance and punctuality issues.

There may also be complex family situations that prevent children from flourishing. The challenges are varied and there is no "one size fits all". At St Michael's, we will ensure that all teaching staff are involved in the analysis of data and identification of pupils, so that they are fully aware of the areas needing attention to ensure every child meets reaches their potential.

Ultimate Objectives

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, at the same time, also benefits the non-disadvantaged pupils in our school. Implicit to the intended outcomes detailed below is that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment will be sustained and improved alongside progress for their disadvantaged peers. Our approach will be responsive to common challenges and individual needs, rooted in robust diagnostic assessment, not assumptions about the impact of disadvantage. The approaches we have adopted complement each other to help pupils excel. To ensure they are effective we will:

- We ensure that teaching and learning opportunities meet the needs of all the pupils

- We ensure that appropriate provision is made for pupils who belong to vulnerable groups, this includes ensuring that the needs of socially disadvantaged pupils are adequately assessed and addressed
- In making provision for socially disadvantaged pupils, we recognise that not all pupils who receive free school meals will be socially disadvantaged
- We also recognise that not all pupils who are socially disadvantaged are registered or qualify for free school meals.
- Pupil premium funding will be allocated following a needs analysis which will identify priority classes, groups or individuals. Limited funding and resources mean that not all children receiving free school meals will be in receipt of pupil premium interventions at one time.

The range of provision the Governors consider making for this group include and would not be limited to:

- Reducing class sizes thus improving opportunities for effective teaching and accelerating progress
- 1-1 support
- Additional teaching and learning opportunities
- All our work through the pupil premium will be aimed at accelerating progress, moving children to at least age-related expectations and beyond.
- Pupil premium resources are to be used to target able children on Free School Meals to achieve Age Related Expectations
- Transition from primary to secondary and transition internally and into EYFS
- Additional learning support and intervention
- Financial assistance for uniform, activities, educational visits and residential trips.
- Ensuring children have first-hand experiences to use in their learning in the classroom.
- Support the funding of specialist learning software.
- To extend specialist teaching and provision.
- Behaviour and nurture support during lunchtimes by providing activities to engage and promote St Michael's values and enhance learning.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Weak vocabulary and language skills
2	Low attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage in all areas
3	High proportion of Pupil Premium pupils also have additional Special Educational Needs
4	Attendance and punctuality issues
5	Gaps in attainment between pupil premium pupils and their peers
6	Limited enrichment opportunities beyond school
7	Difficulties with emotional regulation

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
Disadvantaged pupils make accelerated progress so that the gap to non-PP peers narrow in reading, writing and maths at each key stage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disadvantaged pupils show at least average progress than their peers from their individual starting points. The attainment gap reduces in reading, writing and maths at each key stage. Pupil Premium pupils demonstrate improved fluency, comprehension, vocabulary and reasoning across the curriculum. Work in books shows increasing accuracy, independence and application of taught skills. Lesson observations and learning walks show strong engagement and effective participation from disadvantaged pupils. Assessments and teacher judgements show more disadvantaged pupils working at the expected standard by the end of the year. Targeted support leads to noticeable improvements in confidence and outcomes for PP pupils. Pupil voice indicates greater confidence, resilience and motivation in learning.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance and punctuality improve enough to support consistent learning and progress.
Through Voice 21-aligned oracy pedagogy, PP pupils demonstrate measurable gains, leading to improved reading comprehension and written outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PP pupils use a wider range of vocabulary in spoken and written work. Pupils show greater confidence and clarity when speaking, using agreed talk routines and sentence stems. Reading comprehension improves as pupils can explain, infer and justify their ideas more effectively in discussion. Written outcomes show improved sentence structure, cohesion and use of subject-specific vocabulary. Learning walks show consistent use of Voice 21 talk structures. Teachers report that PP pupils are participating more frequently and meaningfully in classroom discussion. Pupil voice shows that disadvantaged pupils feel more confident expressing ideas and understand how talk helps them learn. Work scrutiny and classroom observations demonstrate that improved oracy is supporting stronger reading and writing outcomes over time.
PP pupils meet or exceed expected phonics standards by Year 1 check or Year 2 retake, with accelerated language gains in EYFS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PP pupils confidently apply phonics knowledge in reading and writing activities. Lesson observations show PP pupils using accurate blending and segmenting strategies. Targeted pupils make rapid progress through phonics phases, keeping up rather than catching up. PP pupils in EYFS show clear improvement in listening, attention, vocabulary and oral language. Daily phonics sessions demonstrate consistent engagement and participation from PP pupils. Intervention records show PP pupils responding well to additional phonics and language support.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading books are well-matched to pupils' phonics stage, and PP pupils read with increasing fluency and independence. • Pupil voice indicates that disadvantaged pupils feel confident in reading and using new sounds/words.
PP attendance improves to meet the national average.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PP pupils attend school regularly and consistently. • The number of PP pupils who are persistently absent reduces noticeably. • PP pupils arrive on time, showing improved punctuality and morning readiness. • Families engage positively with the school's attendance support and communication. • Pastoral records show barriers to attendance are identified early and addressed swiftly. • PP pupils demonstrate greater engagement and participation in class due to improved attendance. • Staff follow the attendance policy consistently, ensuring rapid follow-up for PP pupils with falling attendance.
PP pupils access the school's enrichment entitlement in order to close gaps in attainment, support wellbeing, develop confidence, add to cultural capital and aspirations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PP pupils participate regularly in enrichment opportunities such as clubs, trips, performances, sports, arts or leadership roles. • PP pupils demonstrate greater confidence when speaking, performing, collaborating or taking part in new experiences. • Staff observations show PP pupils are more engaged and motivated in class as a result of enrichment involvement. • Pupil voice indicates PP pupils feel included, valued and excited about learning beyond the classroom. • Enrichment participation contributes to improved wellbeing, with pupils reporting enjoyment, belonging and positive relationships. • Curriculum work and discussions show PP pupils are developing broader cultural knowledge and vocabulary.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers report that enrichment experiences help PP pupils make stronger connections in reading, writing and wider curriculum learning. Families of PP pupils engage positively with enrichment opportunities and feel supported in enabling access.
PP pupils receiving interventions to make accelerated progress from starting points.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PP pupils demonstrate clear, rapid improvement in the specific skills targeted by their intervention (e.g., phonics, reading, writing, maths, language). Pupils show increased confidence and independence when applying these skills back in class. Intervention records show pupils are meeting or exceeding their short-term learning targets within each review cycle. Classwork shows transfer of learning, with pupils able to use taught strategies without adult prompting. Teachers report that PP pupils are making faster than expected progress compared to their baseline assessments. Regular review meetings show that interventions are appropriately matched, adjusted or intensified based on progress. Pupil voice indicates they understand their progress, feel supported, and are motivated to improve. Attendance at interventions is high and consistent, enabling pupils to benefit fully from the support.

Activity in this academic year

Budgeted cost:

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed

<p>Embedding the Voice 21 training and curriculum development. £8,000</p>	<p>Research shows that improving spoken language helps pupils make strong academic progress, especially in reading and writing.</p> <p>The Education Endowment Foundation finds oral language interventions lead to around 6 months of additional progress, particularly benefiting disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>Better classroom talk improves outcomes: Studies show structured talk and dialogic teaching improve understanding in English, science and maths.</p> <p>Supports vocabulary development: Oracy programmes help pupils use and understand more ambitious vocabulary – a key barrier for many disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>Voice 21 is a proven framework: EEF pilots show teachers report clear improvements in pupils' speaking and listening skills after Voice 21 training.</p>	<p>1,5</p>
<p>Continuing to embed the Speech Link programme. £13,000</p>	<p>Speech Link supports early identification of speech and language needs, helping schools spot issues sooner so children don't fall behind.</p> <p>Research shows that strong early speech and language development is closely linked to better reading, writing, social communication and long-term attainment.</p> <p>Language screening and targeted support (such as that provided by Speech Link) are shown to improve oral language, vocabulary and listening skills, which particularly benefits disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>The programme provides structured, evidence-based intervention activities that help pupils make steady, measurable gains in speech sound production and phonological awareness.</p> <p>Teachers and support staff gain increased confidence and knowledge in delivering speech and language support through the programme's training and resources.</p> <p>Consistent use of Speech Link leads to more effective collaboration between class teachers, SENCOs, and external specialists, ensuring joined-up provision for vulnerable pupils.</p> <p>Embedding the programme improves classroom access because pupils with speech or language difficulties can participate more confidently in reading, writing and oracy activities.</p> <p>A whole-school approach to speech and language support reduces barriers to learning and helps close early gaps that disproportionately affect Pupil Premium pupils.</p>	<p>1,2,3,4</p>

<p>Ensuring sustainability of the Forest School approach by adopting an outdoor learning model so more pupils can access this, and staff feel confident to deliver.</p> <p>£8,000</p>	<p>Outdoor learning supports children's wellbeing, cognitive development and academic success, with research showing benefits to mental health, behaviour and engagement.</p> <p>Forest School approaches improve children's confidence, independence, creativity and problem-solving, as shown by practitioner research.</p> <p>Studies highlight that time in nature has positive psychological and health benefits and supports equitable wellbeing outcomes for all pupils.</p> <p>Research shows Forest School can help tackle the growing mental health needs of primary-aged children, especially those with limited access to green spaces.</p> <p>Outdoor learning increases motivation, enjoyment and positive attitudes to school, which links to improved behaviour and engagement.</p> <p>Evidence shows outdoor learning boosts attendance, enthusiasm and hands-on learning, benefiting children who struggle with traditional classroom settings.</p> <p>High-quality outdoor learning enhances social skills, cooperation and peer relationships, supporting whole-child development.</p>	<p>4,6,7</p>
<p>Small group or 1:1 intervention for PP pupils.</p> <p>£20,000</p>	<p>Targeted small-group and 1:1 support is shown to be one of the most effective ways to accelerate progress for pupils who are behind.</p> <p>The Education Endowment Foundation identifies small-group tuition and 1:1 tutoring as high-impact strategies that can help pupils make rapid gains in reading, writing and maths.</p> <p>Interventions allow teaching to be precisely matched to gaps in learning, helping PP pupils catch up quickly.</p> <p>Smaller groups enable pupils to receive more feedback, modelling and practice, improving confidence and accuracy.</p> <p>For PP pupils with weaker vocabulary or oral language skills, small-group work provides more opportunities for talk, guided explanation and structured practice.</p> <p>Pupils often feel more comfortable asking questions and practising key skills in a small group.</p>	<p>1,3,5</p>

	<p>Improved transfer back to class: Well-run interventions help pupils apply new skills in whole-class lessons, boosting overall attainment.</p> <p>Works best when linked to classroom learning: Research shows that interventions have greatest impact when they are aligned with what pupils are learning in class and monitored regularly.</p>	
<p>The effective deployment of staff.</p> <p>£62,586</p>	<p>Effective staff deployment ensures the right support is matched to the right pupils, helping disadvantaged pupils make faster progress.</p> <p>Research shows that teaching assistants are most effective when trained, directed and deployed purposefully — not used for general supervision.</p> <p>Structured deployment allows staff to provide targeted, high-quality interventions, which the EEF identifies as a high-impact approach for disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>When staff work closely with teachers, pupils benefit from consistent modelling, feedback and reinforcement of key skills.</p> <p>Clear roles and routines mean pupils receive timely support, reducing learning gaps before they widen.</p> <p>Deploying staff effectively increases capacity in the classroom, enabling small-group work, precision teaching and pre/post-teaching for PP pupils.</p> <p>Well-trained staff improve the quality of classroom talk, language support and questioning — all of which benefit pupils with lower starting points.</p> <p>Staff confidence and expertise increase when deployment is planned and reviewed, resulting in more consistent and impactful provision across the school.</p>	1,2,3,4,5,6,7
<p>Nurture and wellbeing systems to support pupils at every stage.</p>	<p>Strong nurture and wellbeing systems help pupils feel safe, settled and ready to learn, which improves engagement and behaviour.</p> <p>Supportive relationships and consistent routines help pupils develop emotional regulation, reducing barriers to learning.</p>	4,7

£19,306	<p>Children with strong wellbeing foundations show better attendance, increased participation and improved confidence.</p> <p>Early pastoral support can prevent small worries from becoming bigger learning or behaviour problems.</p> <p>Nurture approaches help pupils build positive social skills, such as cooperation, empathy and resilience.</p> <p>Emotional wellbeing is closely linked to better academic outcomes, especially for pupils facing disadvantage.</p> <p>A whole-school approach to wellbeing allows staff to identify needs early and provide targeted, timely support.</p> <p>Staff who understand nurture principles can create calm, consistent learning environments that benefit all pupils, including those who are vulnerable or anxious.</p>	
Attendance and Welfare Officer. £19,216	<p>Regular attendance is strongly linked to higher attainment, and disadvantaged pupils are statistically more likely to have lower attendance.</p> <p>An Attendance and Welfare Officer provide early intervention, helping to address issues before they affect learning or behaviour.</p> <p>Strong attendance systems improve consistency, routines and readiness to learn, benefiting pupils who may face multiple barriers.</p> <p>Direct support for families helps remove practical barriers (e.g., routines, transport, anxieties), leading to more consistent school attendance.</p>	4,7
Breakfast Club provides a free breakfast for all children to start their day. £12,600	<p>A healthy breakfast improves pupils' energy levels, focus and readiness to learn, helping them engage more effectively in lessons.</p> <p>Breakfast provision supports better attendance and punctuality, especially for disadvantaged pupils who may have less consistent morning routines.</p> <p>Pupils arriving early for breakfast benefit from a calm, positive start to the day, reducing anxiety and improving behaviour.</p> <p>Eating breakfast at school helps ensure pupils do not start lessons hungry, which is linked to stronger concentration and improved memory.</p>	4,7
A specialist music teacher. £10,000	<p>Specialist music teaching supports pupils' cognitive development, including memory, attention and listening skills, which strengthen learning across the curriculum.</p> <p>Music education is shown to improve speech, language and communication, helping to close vocabulary and oracy gaps often seen in disadvantaged pupils.</p>	5,6

	<p>High-quality music provision builds pupils' confidence, resilience and self-expression, supporting emotional wellbeing.</p> <p>Participation in music helps pupils develop discipline, concentration and teamwork, skills that transfer into classroom learning.</p>	
A range of after school clubs. £10,000	<p>After-school clubs help increase engagement, motivation and enjoyment of school, supporting better attitudes to learning.</p> <p>Participation in enrichment activities is linked with improved self-confidence, teamwork and social skills, which particularly benefit disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>After-school opportunities help close the experience and cultural capital gap for PP pupils by offering activities they may not access outside school.</p> <p>Clubs provide extra chances for pupils to develop physical health, creativity and resilience, supporting whole-child development</p>	5,6
A range of well-planned educational and school visits. £15,000	<p>Educational visits broaden pupils' experiences and cultural capital, helping disadvantaged pupils access opportunities they may not have outside school.</p> <p>Trips make learning more meaningful and memorable, improving understanding and recall of key curriculum content.</p> <p>Real-world experiences boost vocabulary, curiosity and background knowledge, supporting reading comprehension and writing.</p> <p>Visits increase pupils' motivation, engagement and enjoyment of school, contributing to better attitudes to learning.</p>	6

Total budgeted cost: £197,708

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes (2024-25)

Objective 1

To ensure the attendance of pupils in receipt of pupil premium is at least in line with those of peers in school.

School attendance in 2022/23 was 93.6%, which, although low for the school, was broadly in line with national averages. In 2023/24, attendance improved, with the school achieving 94.1% compared with the national average of 94.5%. In 2024/25, whole-school attendance saw a slight decline to 94%.

Attendance for pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding has remained above national averages for the past three consecutive academic years.

Objective 2

To continue to ensure the outcomes for pupils in receipt of pupil premium are at least in line with those of peers in school across the curriculum.

At the end of Key Stage 2, disadvantaged pupils at St Michael's achieve well compared with disadvantaged pupils nationally. Over the past three years, outcomes in writing and mathematics have been above the national average; while reading and the combined reading, writing and mathematics measure are broadly in line with national figures.

Disadvantaged pupils - Reading, writing and mathematics expected standard

Year	Cohort	School disadvantaged compared to national disadvantaged			School disadvantaged compared to national non-disadvantaged			Year group context
		School	National	National distribution banding	National (non dis)	Gap	Gap Trend	
3-year	61	49%	46%	Close to average (non-sig)	68%	-18	Not applicable	Not applicable
2025	20	60%	47%	Above (non-sig)	69%	-9	Narrowing	High - FSM
2024	20	35%	46%	Close to average (non-sig)	67%	-32	Widening	High - FSM
2023	21	52%	44%	Close to average (non-sig)	66%	-14	Not available	High - FSM

Objective 3

Ensure the well-being needs of all pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding are met to ensure they are on track to make or exceed expected progress and attainment.

Pupil Premium funding was used effectively to ensure that the well-being needs of all eligible pupils were met, enabling them to stay on track to make, and in many cases exceed, expected progress and attainment. Targeted pastoral interventions- such as nurture provision in The Nest, emotional-literacy support, mentoring and access to trusted adults- helped pupils develop greater confidence, resilience and self-regulation. As a result, disadvantaged pupils showed improved engagement in lessons, stronger attendance patterns and increased readiness to learn. Ongoing monitoring demonstrated that these pupils were better equipped to overcome individual barriers, leading to sustained improvements in both their well-being and academic outcomes. The strategic use of funding therefore had a clear and positive impact on pupils' personal development and their overall achievement.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
Safeguarding SLA	Clennell Services
Parent communication tool	Seesaw
Attainment and progress tracker	Arbor
Attainment and progress tracker	Arbor
Child Protection Online Management System	CPOMs