Pupil premium strategy statement 2026-2027

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. Nicolas CE Primary School
Number of pupils in school	393
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	69 18%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers **(3 year plans are recommended)**	2026-2027
Date this statement was published	December 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2027
Statement authorised by	Andy Spooner
Pupil premium lead	Lorna Page
Governor / Trustee lead	Roger Johnson

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£108,410
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	£108,410

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our intention is that all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and achieve their full potential across all subject areas. The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve, belong and thrive and make good progress.

Everyone at St. Nicolas School is committed to meeting their pastoral, social and academic needs within a caring and nurturing environment. We hope that each child will develop a love for learning to 'live life to the full'. We have high expectations for all children and our aim is to help children to discover what makes them feel joy and bring them purpose. We work to support children in developing strong communication skills and emotional literacy to build strong relationships.

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 disadvantaged attainment gap and benefit **all** the children at our school. It is our intention that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment will be sustained and improved alongside progress from their disadvantaged peers.

Our approach will be based on assessments, knowledge of the child and the challenges they face, alongside a strong evidence base- drawn from our experience and secure research (such as that published by the Education Endowment Foundation).

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Assessment information and observations of pupils indicate a language gap between disadvantaged and other children from the start of the Reception year. Our children require extra support to develop communication skills and the vocabulary needed to engage fully in the curriculum.
2	Disadvantaged pupils do not attain as highly as their peers in writing, and fewer achieve the greater depth standard. Children find selecting the vocabulary and grammatical structures that reflect what the writing requires a specific challenge.

3	Observations and discussions with children and families have identified social, emotional and mental health issues for some disadvantaged children.
4	Attendance for a number of disadvantaged pupils is below 96%. This has a negative impact on their education.

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	Improved oral language and communication skills, particularly within Reception and KS1.	Assessments and observations will show improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils. Pupils will be able to talk about their experiences and learning confidently. Disadvantaged pupils will make good progress in Reception and Y1 to achieve end of year expectations and will have closed the gap.
2	High quality inclusive teaching to close the achievement gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers in writing.	For all disadvantaged pupils to make good progress in writing by the end of the key stage. Teacher feedback improves visible outcomes for pupils and supports higher attaining pupils to make good progress by the end of KS2.
3	To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing and academic resilience for all children.	Evidence of sustained wellbeing and greater application of metacognition skills demonstrated by: • Qualitive data from pupil voice, observations and parent questionnaire • High levels of participation in extra-curricular clubs and enrichment activities
4	Increased rates of attendance for target pupils.	The % of children who are persistently absent to have reduced. Disadvantaged attendance to be in line with the national average for all schools.

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: £85,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Continue to embed high-quality interactions in the early years and across the school. Continue to enhance our communication rich learning environments.	There is strong evidence that the rate at which children develop language is sensitive to the amount of input they receive from the adults and peers around them. The number and quality of conversations children have with adults and peers throughput the day in a language rich environment is crucial. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/eef-blog-the-shrec-approach-4-evidence-informed-strategies-to-promote-high-quality-interactions-with-young-children 'Teaching by Listening: The Importance of Adult-Child Conversations to Language Development' Frederick J. Zimmerman, Jill Gilkerson, Jeffrey A. Richards, Dimitri A. Christakis, Dongxin Xu, Sharmistha Gray and Umit Yapanel Early Excellence – 'Navigating a sea of Talk' https://earlyexcellence.com/latest-news/pressarticles/navigating-the-sea-of-talk/ Professor Julie Fisher – 'interacting or interfering' 1 8 inclusive practice and participation for all in lessons' Improving Literacy. Supporting oral language development. EEF There is a strong evidence base that suggests oral language interventions, including dialogic activities such as high-quality classroom discussion, are inexpensive to implement with high impacts on reading: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions	1 and 2
Internal CPD in line with the Writing Framework.	The best available evidence indicates that great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes for their pupils. 1. High-quality teaching | EEF How Does It Work — Teaching WalkThrus | Multi-Platform Teaching Tools & Resources To Support Teachers - Primary Schools - Secondary Schools - Further Education - Coaching Tools - Webinars | Oliver Cavigioli - Tom Sherrington | UK	2
Embed inclusive adaptive teaching strategies in all subjects.	Guide to Inclusive Teaching | EEF Education Endowment Foundation - ScenarioSpace How our adaptive teaching supports every learner – Teaching Dylan William – the most critical part of teaching is to start from what the children know. Building from our understanding of	2

	formative assessment to ensure adaptions are made to enable all children to access and progress in their learning.	
Further training for all staff in Rocket Phonics programme to secure stronger phonics teaching for all pupils. Rocket phonics to support the lowest 20% of readers in KS2.	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base that indicates a positive impact on the accuracy of word reading, particularly for disadvantaged pupils: Phonics | Toolkit Strand | Education Endowment Foundation | EEF	2

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

Budgeted cost: £4700

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Additional phonics sessions targeted at disadvantaged pupils who require further support.	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating positive impact on pupils, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds. Targeted phonics interventions have been shown to be more effective when delivered as regular sessions over a period up to 12 weeks: Phonics | Toolkit Strand | Education Endowment Foundation | EEF	2
Core words approach to teaching vocabulary to build a word rich environment. Promote language and have fun with words.	Oral language interventions can have a positive impact on pupils' language skills. Approaches that focus on speaking, listening and a combination of the two show positive impacts on attainment: Oral language interventions | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1 and 2
ShREC approach Disadvantaged children with low language development identified. Staff interact daily to practise, expand and develop conversation skills.	Closing the Vocabulary and "Word Gap": Research shows ShREC shifts adult behaviour from talking *at* children to talking *with* children, increasing both the quality of vocabulary exposure and the frequency of back-and-forth "brain-building" dialogues. The ShREC approach | EEF	1
All children screened using Wellcomm. Gaps in	WellComm is widely recognized as an evidence-based speech and language toolkit for early identification and intervention in children from birth to age six.	1

language identified. Targeted intervention and knowledge of assessment used in play.	Improving children's language outcomes with the Early Years… | EEF Five successful strategies to identify and support speech and language needs in the early years - GL Assessment	
Internal enhanced provision initiative to focus on the social and emotional needs of children	EEF Understanding the use of internal alternative provision for students at risk of persistent absence or exclusion Understanding the use of internal alternative provision for… | EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	3

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

Budgeted cost: £21,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
HSLW to build strong connections with families, early intervention with attendance, support through EHAs, TAF process	Parental engagement has a significant positive impact on children's learning. Parental engagement | EEF Review of best practice in parental engagement - GOV.UK	3 and 4
Therapeutic mentoring to support children with SEMH needs (attachment disorder and trauma). Pastoral team to provide targeted support for pupils with social emotional learning.	There is extensive evidence associating childhood social and emotional skills with improved outcomes at school and in later life (e.g., improved academic performance, attitudes, behaviour and relationships with peers): EEF_Social_and_Emotional_Learning.pdf (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	3 and 4
Extended home visits and time given to build relationships ensures families have all the information needed in order to support their child in school. Staff able to address barriers to starting school quickly.	Getting children ready for reception: How schools and early years settings can work together with families to support transition into reception	3 and 4
Embed revised approach to improving attendance in line with DfE guidance.	NfER briefing for school leaders identifies addressing attendance as a key step. Secrets to Success: How to spend the Pupil Premium suggests appointing a well-qualified HSLW where poor attendance is causing problems of underachievement.	4

Disadvantaged attendance is closely monitored, pupils below 96% are identified and protocols followed. Attendance officer to monitor pupils and follow up quickly on absences. First day response provision. HSLW will pick up a pupil from home if required.	Embedding principles of good practice set out in the DfE's Improving School Attendance advice.	
Early start support- Breakfast Club offered for all PP pupils to ensure they are given breakfast and arrive to school on time.	The DfE report: Evaluation of Breakfast Clubs in Schools with High Levels of Deprivation Research Report suggests they contribute to various positive outcomes for pupils (improved concentration, pupils ate more healthily, improvements in punctuality).	4
Cultural capital experiences promoted in rich reading experiences. Reduction in cost of trips. Uniform vouchers. Disadvantaged pupils are prioritised for after school clubs.	Children are able to enhance their academic learning, create aspirations and have opportunities to challenge themselves and succeed. Learning is contextualised in concrete experiences and language rich environments. Pupils can relate to the carefully selected texts that include and celebrate culturally diverse backgrounds of our pupils and community. Extra-curricular activities boost confidence and promote social inclusion.	All
Contingency fund for issues that need an immediate response or to support pupils to fulfil their 'bucket list'.	Based on our experiences and those similar schools to ours, we have identified a need to set a small amount of funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified. Pupils have created a list of activities which have created a wish list of things 'to do' before they leave St. Nicolas, we want to support them as much as possible to achieve this!	All

Total budgeted cost: £110 700

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2025 to 2026 academic year.

Improved oral language and communication skills.

Our assessments show that 100% of disadvantaged children achieved the Communication and Language increased by the end of the year, observations reflect the positive impact and increased confidence in the children's ability to express themselves. The number of children achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) increased compared to the previous year and all children made good progress based on their starting points.

All children who participated in the Core Words targeted group session improved their age-standardised scores and made good progress in their language development assessments.

Language development is well supported across the school through high-quality interactions with staff, who use multiple meaningful interactions to support children to thrive.

63% of our disadvantaged children passed the year 1 phonic screening. By the end of year 2, 60% passed. This remains below the national comparison but increased from the previous year. Where children did not meet the standard, there were specific barriers that are being supported.

Improved writing attainment among disadvantaged pupils.

We have analysed the performance of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the previous academic year, drawing on national assessment data and our own internal summative and formative assessments. Through the school, high-quality outcomes for children are reflected in work samples, assessment data alongside pupil voice.

A proportion (64%) of the disadvantaged cohort presented with complex, co-occurring SEND. While this impacted their ability to reach the age-related Expected Standard, all pupils successfully achieved or exceeded their individual progress targets.

In reading, 64% of disadvantaged children met the standard, compared to 63% nationally.

In writing, 36% of disadvantaged children met the standard, compared to 60% nationally.

In maths, 55% of disadvantaged children met the standard, compared to 62% nationally.

The 'headline figure' in the government tables is the proportion of children who reach the expected standard in all three areas: reading, writing and maths, by the end of year 6. 36% of disadvantaged children met the standard in all areas, compared to 49% for disadvantaged children nationally.

SEMH needs of specific pupils are well supported leading to emotional stability and higher levels of self-confidence.

Pupils and their families are well supported through HSLW intervention, as well as our whole school ethos and investment in positive relationships. There is clear evidence from pupil voice that they feel safe and cared for in school. The majority can say how they feel and what they would do with difficult feelings.

PSHCE sessions delivered to Reception children benefit all children and promote self-regulation by identifying and expressing feelings in a fun and engaging way.

Our therapeutic mentor supports disadvantaged pupils providing strong relationships and communication with parents and carers, this ensure school and home are working together to benefit the child.

Breakfast Club continues to support families early on in their day so that they are able to enter the classroom ready to learn, on time.

End of year Reception data shows the positive impact of the emotional literacy work the staff have developed through investment in teaching children self-regulation strategies. 100% of disadvantaged children achieved the ELG in Personal, Social, and Emotional Development which is an increase from the previous year.

Attendance for a small number of disadvantaged pupils is below 96%.

Overall attendance for disadvantaged pupils was 90.51%, compared to 95.68% for non-disadvantaged peers. While targeted tracking to enabled families to engage at some level with Attendance contracts, the County Attendance Team and HSLW support; the attendance gap has not closed. Persistent absence among disadvantaged children remains a focus as addressing attendance for our vulnerable pupils is the highest priority and a clear strategy is in place for these children.

Disadvantaged attendance is currently at 92%.