St Mary’s Catholic School

Pupil Premium Strategy Statement

# Introduction

The Pupil Premium is additional funding allocated to St Mary’s Catholic School. It is used to support students who, within the last six years, have been registered for free school meals at any point or have been on a local authority’s looked-after children register. Pupil Premium funding applies to children of service personnel too. St Mary’s currently has 291 Pupil Premium students in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, representing 23.9% of the school population in these year groups.

At St Mary’s, we have an excellent record of closing the gap between our disadvantaged students and those who are not in receipt of Pupil Premium funding. We have the highest aspirations for all our students, regardless of social background, and allocate our resources so that they have maximum impact on pupil progress and learning. This is reflected in the fact that, year on year, our valued added scores, the expected progress that a student makes between Year 6 and Year 11, are significantly above national averages for both Pupil Premium students and non-Pupil Premium students. We are proud of this outstanding achievement.

Clearly, 2020-21 was different to all other school years. The impact of the pandemic has been significant, disrupting our normal routines and constantly forcing us to readjust our plans. During the school year, there have been times when some pupils have gone into self-isolation whilst others have remained in school. At other times, there has been full school closure and all pupils have been learning at home. This has required a more pragmatic approach in the way we have used our PP funding this year.

This statement details our school’s use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2021 to 2022 academic year) funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged students. 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 Mary’s Catholic School |
| Number of students in school  | 291 PP (1461 NOR) |
| Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible students | 23.9% |
| Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers | 2021 - 2022 |
| Date this statement was published | 01/07/2021 |
| Date on which it will be reviewed | 01/07/2022 |
| Statement authorised by | E Patterson |
| Pupil premium lead | I Stanton |
| Governor / Trustee lead | A Ness |

# Funding overview

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Detail | Amount |
| Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year | £278525 |
| Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year | £42195 |
| Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable) | £0 |
| Total budget for this academic year | £320720 |

# Pupil premium strategy plan

## Statement of intent

At St Mary’s, we are never complacent and our high expectations in every area mean that we are always striving to further develop all areas of the school, with the heart of our mission being to provide our students and their families with the highest standard of holistic education to prepare our students fully for their future lives, ensuring that all students, whatever their background, personal or educational challenges, are able to make the most of their unique God-given gifts and talents and thrive and be very happy at St Mary’s. We are focused on delivering high-quality lessons to all students, which gives students from all backgrounds the best possible educational experience. Since 2007 our academic progress has been SIG+ and our average Progress 8 score from 2015-2019 was +0.5. This includes outstanding progress for our disadvantaged students and students with SEND. Our Disadvantaged students’ Progress 8 (+0.2) over the last 5 years is higher than National Non-Disadvantaged Students Progress 8 (+0.13) and our SEND Progress 8 (0.25) over the last 5 years is higher than National No SEND Progress 8 (0.07). We aspire to the highest standards for all students and to ensure that we recognise that some students need additional support to fulfil their potential. We make use of the Pupil Premium funding to maintain a high standard of teaching and learning and improve intervention strategies for those students who need additional support. We have reviewed the strategies implemented in previous years, investigated the barriers to learning for disadvantaged students and used the Education Endowment Fund (EEF) Toolkit and evidence from the Ofsted report ‘The Pupil Premium: how schools are spending the funding successfully to maximise achievement’ to research the most effective strategies to overcome these barriers to learning. Our approach and strategies are also informed by the document ‘Turning the page on poverty,’ which recognises that the problems caused by poverty on educational outcomes are complex and difficult to solve. Issues are often deep-seated and they require long-term plans for these issues to be addressed effectively. Our desired outcomes and the strategies for alleviating the impact of poverty on education are listed below.

## Challenges

We recognise that the main challenges to achievement for our disadvantaged students are:

1. Attendance and Punctuality Issues
2. Social, Emotional and Mental Health
3. Literacy and numeracy skills
4. Behaviour Challenges
5. Parental Engagement

## Intended Outcomes

The table below 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 |
| For Disadvantaged students to continue to make outstanding progress | Continue to achieve positive progress 8 for disadvantaged pupils  |
| For Disadvantaged students to continue to make outstanding achievement | Continue to achieve high attainment scores for disadvantaged pupils |
| Improved attendance | Improve attendance to national average for all pupils |
| Increased EBacc entry | Better than national average EBacc Entry for all pupils |
| Decreased exclusions and behaviour incidents. A decrease in the number of exclusions and in line with national average for all pupils. A reduced number of behaviour incidents.  | Decreased exclusions and behaviour incidents. A decrease in the number of exclusions and in line with national average for all pupils. A reduced number of behaviour incidents.  |

# Activity in this academic year

## Teaching

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
| Reducing Class Sizes | Across the curriculum, there are many classes with fewer than fifteen students. Whilst smaller class sizes alone do not necessarily lead to improved attainment, they do allow for more one-to-one and small-group support from the teacher during the lesson. This improves outcomes considerably, especially in those groups where students require more intervention. What is more, smaller class sizes are a result of the high degree of flexibility within our curriculum. In short, this means that the vast majority of our Key Stage 4 pupils study subjects that are most suited to their needs and preferences. Evidence from the EEF indicates that a reduction in class size needs to be significant, e.g. below 20 students to have a positive impact. Where this is achieved the impact on students learning shows an increase of 3 months progress across an academic year | 3 |
| Additional Maths and English classes | We have created additional classes in maths and English across Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 to provide our more vulnerable students with extra support in the most important areas of the curriculum. These classes run at times when it is possible and appropriate to withdraw these students from other lessons. For example, some pupils in Key Stage 3 study only one modern foreign language instead of two. This time is spent catching up on literacy and numeracy. Evidence from the EEF indicates that students tutored in small groups can make up to four months progress when compared with larger groups or whole classes. |  |

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

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|  |  |  |
| Reviewing the identification of students who have gaps in their literacy by using the IDL software to ensure all students who have gaps in their literacy are quickly identified upon entry to the school and are provided with appropriate, bespoke support consistently in KS3 and KS4 to swiftly improve their literacy levels.  | Intervention for weaker readers outside lessons complements reading curriculum in subjects.  Impact of reading support/intervention evaluated regularly to ensure effective/improved outcomes. In September 2021 all Year 7/8 students completed testing to identify reading ages. This, combined with other data and information from Primary schools, has been used to identify three different cohorts of weaker readers: Fresh Start for students with a reading age of below 9 years 6 months are withdrawn from non-core subjects on a carousel for 5 hours over a fortnight to follow this phonics-based reading project;  IDL Reader will be used to support low to middle literacy ability students as well as students with a diagnosis of dyslexia; and Registration Reading for students with low reading ages but who do not meet the threshold for more formal intervention.  This takes place in the library and is led by LSAs and Sixth Form Reading coaches three times per week.    | 3 |
| Further enhance the focus on literacy for all students, especially those in KS3, by providing them with access to resources and opportunities to develop their passion for reading.  | Reading for pleasure and disciplinary literacy are core components of our robust whole-school literacy plan. Reading for pleasure is informed by survey data on students reading habits and research into how best to build a reading culture, such as form time reading, currently reading posters and reading to students. The books chosen have a wide ranging appeal, and interesting themes and cultural references in order to build cultural capital. Choices are age appropriate and content becomes more serious and challenging progressively through the age groups. Representation of gender and race was also factored in when choosing books, both in terms of characters and authors.   departmental reading lists.  | 3 |

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

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
| Review the support provided to the disadvantaged students on the transition from KS4 to KS5 to ensure all students in KS4 are given the appropriate support to develop and achieve their aspirations, including ensuring they have the appropriate culture capital to not be disadvantaged in either the working world or in further education.  | During Year 11, all students have one-to-one meetings with a member of the pastoral team, in which they are given detailed and expert advice and guidance on pathways in education, apprenticeships or employment. We are particularly attentive to the needs of our vulnerable and disadvantaged students. Follow up meetings, ongoing support and contextual knowledge of each individual student ensure that the advice and guidance that we give are highly effective.  | 4 |
| Further develop the pastoral intervention provided to students at KS4 to ensure they achieve their academic potential. | In Year 11, we identify underachieving students, who are largely from vulneralbe/disadvantaged settings. Five or six members of staff, including an AHT, HoKS, Hoy and two HoDs, provide pastoral support and mentoring with the aim of identifying barriers to progress, increasing engagement and improving academic performance. A key aspect of this provess is regualr contact with a parent. Students respond very positively to this form of intervention as it strikes the right balance between support and accountability, and not only keeps parents informed, but encourages them to be more active in their support.  | 2 |
| Reviewing the instilling of aspiration through all aspects of the curriculum from KS3 to KS5 to confirm that all students are comprehensively aware of the potential career and educational pathways available to them after they leave St. Mary’s. This can also include access to opportunities and visits which have not been able to run in 2020-2021 due to the impact of COVID-19. | We are developing a Career Strategies programme which will allow all students to track their own journey, to record the advice that they have received and evaluate their next steps.Part of the programme will be to ensure that students engage in activities which allow them to raise aspirations and challenge stereotypical thinking in terms of gender, class and ethnicity. Adhering to the Gatsby Benchmarks, we want students to experience one meaningful encounter with an employer every year that they are at school, as well as have one experience of the workplace in KS4 and KS5.  | 4 |
| Developing the use of the existing cashless payment system in school to ensure no student suffers from material deprivation.  | The cashless payment system ensures that all students in receipt of PP have their card automotacally topped up each. It also ensures that PP students have the same sytem of payement as non-PP, reducing the possiblilty of any kind of social stigma. We are working with the catering provider to improve the range and offer of food available to PP students for the set daily amount.  | 2 |
| Review the rewards scheme currently in school and use this as appropriate to engage all students with all aspects of school life. | Most departments have their own rewards schemes in process, such as postcards and phone calls home to parents. Across the whole school, we are replacing the use of SIMs with Class Charts as the main rewards system, with the accumulation of Praise Points resulting in termly prizes. Ensuring that praise points are awarded to our disadvantaged students is a major part of this new whole-school strategy.  |  |
| High levels of particiaption of disadvantaged students in wider-curricular activities. | Find out levels of participation of disadvantaged students in wider-curricular activities, finding out if there are any barriers to partcipation, such as timing or cost, and look for practical solutions to resolve these issues.  | 2 |
| Review/analyse transport arrangements of those disadavanted students whose journey to and from school is costly and time-consuming | Carry out pupil voice interviews with disadvantaged students from Byker, Walker and in the west of the city, to find out what problems they face in their daily journey to and from school in terms of cost and time, and the impact that these may have on their willingness/ability to take part in after school clubs or attend revision lessons at the end of the school day. Look at ways to alleviate any problems and look for practical solutions to address these issues.  | 1 |
| Reach out to parents in our most disadvantaged communities, raising parental awareness of the education system and, at the same time, finding out about any barriers to achievement that we might be able to address  | Organise visits to the most deprived communities that we serve, using the local primary school as base and inviting parents to attend drop-in sessions. It will be an opportunity to fact find, raise awareness of how the education system works, as well as create stronger links and better lines of communication with the parents in these communities, so that they feel more empowered, more informed, and more able to play an active role in their children’s education. | 5 |

# Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

## Pupil premium strategy outcomes

In recent academic years, Pupil Premium funding has allowed our children to benefit from a range of strategies, including:

## 1. Literacy Programme

The evidence that higher literacy levels lead to greater examination success and improved life chances is overwhelming. At the start of Year 7, we gauge the literacy of all pupils using the Suffolk Reading Test. The students with the lowest reading levels follow a daily reading intervention programme, which, depending on need, can last for the whole of Key Stage 3. For children who find reading a particular challenge, the programme extends into Key Stage 4.

**Cost:** £20,000

Commentary

Pupils remain on the programme for as long as it is necessary. They work their way through a range materials and do so at a pace that is appropriate to each individual. The pupils who attend these intensive literacy sessions make big gains in their reading ability. There is a growing body of evidence that suggests that higher literacy levels are linked to both improved academic achievement and improved personal development. This is why we invest so much in improving the literacy levels of our pupils. This year, 15 of our Year 7 Pupil Premium students benefit from this intervention.

## 2. Reducing Class Sizes

Across the curriculum, there are many classes with fewer than fifteen students. Whilst smaller class sizes alone do not necessarily lead to improved attainment, they do allow for more one-to-one and small-group support from the teacher during the lesson. This improves outcomes considerably, especially in those groups where students require more intervention. What is more, smaller class sizes are a result of the high degree of flexibility within our curriculum. In short, this means that the vast majority of our Key Stage 4 pupils study subjects that are most suited to their needs and preferences.

**Cost:** £100,000

## Commentary

All our Pupil Premium students benefit from this strategy. This year, across Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, there are 34 classes with 15 students or fewer.

## 3. Additional Maths and English classes

We have created additional classes in maths and English across Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 to provide our more vulnerable students with extra support in the most important areas of the curriculum. These classes run at times when it is possible and appropriate to withdraw these students from other lessons. For example, some pupils in Key Stage 3 study only one modern foreign language instead of two. This time is spent catching up on literacy and numeracy.

We also run intensive tutor-time maths, English, and science sessions for small groups of Year 11 pupils in the spring and summer terms. Underachieving socially disadvantaged pupils are a specific target group for this intervention strategy, which has been very successful over the last few years.

**Cost:** £50,000

# Commentary

As the data above demonstrates, the achievement of our Pupil Premium students in maths and English is outstanding.

## 4. Pastoral Care

Improving behaviour, attendance and punctuality across all year groups continues to be an important element at St Mary’s in the drive to raise the attainment of all students, particularly those in receipt of Pupil Premium and those from ‘Just About Managing’ families. Last year, we strengthened further the leadership of pastoral care within the main school through the appointment of key stage leaders for all three key stages. They now provide leadership responsibility for pastoral provision within their respective key stage, which includes heads of year. We have very high standards in relation to behaviour, attendance, and punctuality, and intervene swiftly when these standards are not being met. Closing any gap in punctuality and attendance between our Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium students is a specific focus.

**Cost:** £26,000

### 5. Additional Learning Support Assistants

Learning support assistants play a vital role in raising achievement across the school. By giving one-to-one support during lessons and ensuring that key concepts are firmly grasped and knowledge and understanding is consolidated, learning support assistants offer essential support to those teachers who work with our most vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils. What is more, learning support assistants also provide one-to-one guidance for pupils on the early morning Fresh Start literacy programme. The Pupil Premium Grant allows us to employ two extra learning support assistants.

**Cost:** £35,000

### 6. Financial Support for Enrichment

All pupils are encouraged and given opportunities to extend their learning and achieve outside the classroom. Pupil Premium funds have allowed the school to subsidise a range of activities for disadvantaged students, including residential trips in the UK and abroad, and diocesan residential retreats. We also subsidise music lessons and subsidise the purchase of musical instruments for our most disadvantaged students. At St Mary’s, we insist that social disadvantage is not a barrier to full participation in extra-curricular activity.

**Cost:** £12,000

### 7. General Financial Support

At St Mary’s, we support our pupils in whatever way we can. Pupil Premium funds have also been used to subsidise uniform and general school equipment, such as stationery and PE kit.

**Cost:** £3,048

# Further information

In June 2021, the St. Mary’s Catholic School Pupil Premium Programme was reviewed against various other similar programmes in schools in the Bishop Bewick Trust, and other outstanding schools in the North East. This was to ensure the strategies provided are the most effective for supporting our disadvantaged pupils.

These schools included St Thomas More Roman Catholic Academy, Sacred Heart Catholic High School, St Cuthbert’s High School and Carmel College.

Findings

All schools have similar provisions in place to that found at St. Mary’s. All schools surveyed, including St. Mary’s are committed to ensuring the highest standards of care for all disadvantaged pupils with bespoke support in literacy, pastoral guidance and mentorship, enhancement of cultural capital, further extra-curricular opportunities, action in preventing deprivation, and ways of developing academic aspiration. The majority of strategies implemented with Pupil Premium funding was consistent across all schools surveyed and indicated that at St. Mary’s all students are provided with schemes and resources which have a maximum impact on pupil progress and learning.

Whilst there are areas for development, which will be advanced in 2021-2022, the provision provided by the school is in in line with similar schools in the surrounding area and provides a comprehensive and robust support programme for our disadvantaged students to ensure deprivation does not hinder their holistic development during their time at St. Mary’s.