

St. Michael's Catholic Grammar School

Pupil premium strategy statement

Founded by the Sisters of the Poor Child Jesus, a Voluntary Aided school in the trusteeship of St Michael's Catholic School Trustee and a member of the Loreto Education Trust.



Approved by:	Will be approved by Curriculum and Standards Committee	Date: Spring 2026
Last reviewed on:	25 th January 2025	
Next review due by:	January 2027	

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2024 to 2025 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 Grammar School
Number of pupils in school	900 (including 6 th Form)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	11% (of Y7 – Y11)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2022/2023 to 2025/2026
Date this statement was published	January 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	January 2027
Statement authorised by	Michael Stimpson, Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Fisoye Fasunloye, Assistant Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Marianne Corcoran

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£81,787
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£81,787
If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At St Michael's, we hold the highest aspirations for every student. Our core intention is that all disadvantaged pupils, regardless of the specific barriers they face, make exceptional progress that is at least in line with their non-disadvantaged peers. This commitment is rooted in our mission as a 'Catholic community where we pursue excellence and each individual is valued as a child of God'. In the spirit of Mary Ward, we fully support the Pupil Premium initiative as an integral part of our Christian mission to treat each student as an individual and to have particular concern for the poor. In doing so, we aim to make our society more just and to improve the life chances of all our under-privileged students. By ensuring our Pupil Premium (PP) students take full advantage of our wider extracurricular offer, we actively build their cultural capital and raise their aspirations for life beyond school, ensuring they have the tools to act with justice and sincerity in the wider world.

The number of students attracting Pupil Premium funding at St Michael's has expanded in recent years, though at 11% of the total school population, it remains smaller than in most similar-sized schools. Our strategy is rooted in professional oversight and individual care. Funding is focused through the Heads and Deputy Heads of Key Stage. Because they know each Pupil Premium student individually, they are best placed to direct funding toward specific learning needs and life-chance enhancements. We provide direct support through enhanced facilities, including out-of-hours library and computer access, alongside comprehensive careers and enterprise education. We reserve specific funds to support individual students with wider world experiences, such as music lessons and funding for curriculum excursions and voluntary trips.

The focus of our strategy is to support all disadvantaged pupils—including the more able—to meet these goals, particularly as we navigate the complex, ongoing challenges of the post-pandemic landscape.

1. **High-Quality Teaching:** This remains the cornerstone of our approach. Proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage gap, our focus on pedagogical excellence benefits the entire school community, ensuring that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment is sustained and improved in tandem with their peers.
2. **Targeted Academic Recovery:** Our strategy is integrated into wider school recovery plans. This includes bespoke study groups for Maths and English, targeted intervention classes, and robust reading programmes.
3. **Evidence-Based Intervention:** We move beyond assumptions. Our approach is rooted in robust diagnostic assessment and is proactive and responsive to both common challenges and the specific individual needs of our students.

Our system of support has been established since the introduction of the Pupil Premium and consistently ensures that our disadvantaged students progress at a rate comparable to the rest of the school. To ensure this high standard is maintained, we use a robust diagnostic approach:

- Internal Monitoring: Progress is monitored at three distinct points during the academic year for every student.
- National Benchmarking: We measure the long-term impact of our strategy against nationally-published data, specifically Attainment-8 scores.
- Future Aspirations: Our strategy extends into the 6th form, where we intend to support our Pupil Premium and Bursary students in achieving places at their chosen university destinations.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	CATs and SATs results indicate lower scores on entry for some disadvantaged students. This would make the curriculum more difficult to access; hence the need to 'catch up' during KS3.
2	The latest Attainment-8 data (2025) indicates that attainment for Pupil Premium students is 7.5 in comparison with 7.8 for all pupils. Keeping a similar level of attainment for Pupil Premium and Non Pupil Premium, as numbers of Pupil Premium increase is a challenge.
3	Reading habits are less likely to be embedded and this can limit the vocabulary of some students. This also impacts on access to the curriculum and hence progress.
4	Our internal data indicates that Pupil Premium (PP) funding is being utilised with significant impact, as evidenced by a consistent positive gap where disadvantaged students are currently outperforming their non-PP peers in core subjects. At a whole-school level, 25.4% of PP students are meeting or exceeding targets, compared to 21.9% of the non-disadvantaged cohort. This trend is particularly pronounced in English (+4.8% gap) and Mathematics (+2.2% gap). A foreseeable challenge is sustaining parity in Year 11 High-Stakes Exams.
5	Ambition and aspiration is not always as strong for some disadvantaged students. This can lead to more limited involvement in the wider life of the school and a gap in cultural capital.
6	Home learning environment, due to financial circumstances and challenges, can limit the ability to learn outside of the classroom as effectively.
7	Internal data and direct dialogue with pupils and their families have highlighted a growing need for social and emotional support. Our findings indicate that many students are navigating complex challenges, ranging from low self-confidence to anxiety and depression. We remain committed to providing the targeted interventions necessary to support their mental health. Consequently, our student support service continues to be in great demand this term, 7% of non PP students in Y7-Y11 are

	currently using this service, whereas 18% of all Pupil Premium students are currently using it.
8	Attendance and punctuality are lower in general and this impacts on learning, both of the students themselves and of other members of the class.

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
Sustaining the progress of disadvantaged pupils across the curriculum at the end of KS4.	Throughout our current plan between now and 2025/26, we will work to ensure that the Progress-8 score of our Pupil Premium students is at least as good as the value for all students at the school.
Enhancing the life chances of disadvantaged students so that they can enjoy the same outcomes and destinations as non-disadvantaged.	By supporting both the academic journey and also the pastoral and extra-curricular journey of our disadvantaged students, we will work to narrow the disparity between groups of students along lines of socio-economic background. This will be evident in Pupil Premium students getting involved in trips, events and musical activities.
Students build resilience and are able to cope with the demands of modern living places.	All students (including disadvantaged students) have easy access to student support services and this leads to enhanced life chances and a more positive outlook upon life.
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing from 2025/26 demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations. a significant participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils.
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all	Sustained high attendance from 2025/26.

pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Intervention from staff, led by the Pastoral Teams and the Inclusion Team, to lead to improved attendance levels of disadvantaged students.
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Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: **£22,000**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Purchase of standardised diagnostic assessments (CATS) and continue to develop the school's Google-based data tracking system.</p> <p>Literacy Screener for Year 7 Requirement that all disadvantaged, SEN and underachieving students are identified on class context sheets and strategies identified to meet their needs and support engagement in and out of lessons. The impact of support is measured after each data drop. Class context sheets to be quality assured to improve quality and use.</p> <p>Explicitly embed metacognitive strategies (teaching pupils <i>how</i> to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning) into their CPD.</p>	<p>Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into the specific strengths and weaknesses of each pupil to help ensure they receive the correct additional support through interventions or teacher instruction:</p> <p><u>Standardised tests Assessing and Monitoring Pupil Progress Education Endowment Foundation EEF</u></p> <p>According to EEF, there is evidence to suggest that feedback involving metacognitive and self-regulatory approaches may have a greater impact on disadvantaged pupils and lower prior attainers than other pupils.</p> <p>Students require clear and actionable feedback to employ metacognitive strategies as they learn, as this information informs their understanding of their specific strengths and areas for improvement, thereby indicating which learning strategies have been effective for them in previously completed work. The effective use of class context sheets will ensure that disadvantaged students are in receipt of high quality support which is reviewed regularly. This is proven to add up to +7 months of progress and is particularly effective for high-attaining disadvantaged students in high-pressure environments.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8

<p>Enhancement of our maths teaching and curriculum planning in line with DfE KS3 and EEF guidance.</p> <p>We will fund teacher release time to embed key elements of the guidance in school, and to access Maths Hub resources and CPD offers (including Teaching for Mastery training).</p>	<p>The DfE non-statutory KS3 guidance has been produced in conjunction with the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics, drawing on evidence-based approaches:</p> <p><u>Teaching mathematics at key stage 3 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</u></p> <p>To teach maths well, teachers need to assess pupils' prior knowledge and understanding effectively, employ manipulatives and representations, teach problem solving strategies, and help pupils to develop more complex mental models:</p> <p><u>KS2 KS3 Maths Guidance 2017.pdf</u> <u>(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)</u></p>	1, 3,
<p>Improving literacy in all subject areas in line with recommendations in the EEF <u>Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools</u> guidance.</p> <p>On-going whole staff training on effective reading strategies, development of disciplinary literacy etc</p> <p>More regular reading tests: Y6, Y7, Y9, Y12</p> <p>Whole-school strategies such as D.E.A.R ('Drop Everything and Read')</p> <p>World Book Day etc</p> <p>We will fund professional development and instructional coaching focussed on each teacher's subject area.</p> <p>The English department and library staff have started a library representatives club to promote reading across the school.</p>	<p>Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for students as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject:</p> <p><u>Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools</u></p> <p>Reading comprehension, vocabulary and other literacy skills are heavily linked with attainment in maths and English:</p> <p><u>word-gap.pdf (oup.com.cn)</u></p> <p>According to the EEF the teaching of reading comprehension strategies appears effective in secondary schools. Approaches involving digital technology are believed to be successful in improving reading comprehension.</p> <p>EEF research demonstrates the importance of developing literacy across the curriculum</p> <p><u>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-guidance-reports/literacy-ks3-ks4</u></p>	2, 3, 4

<p>Oracy is one of this year's whole school focus areas. Students in Year 7 have already taken part in an event for National Poetry Day and Year 10 have taken part in the Jack Petchey Speak Out challenge.</p>		
<p>Subject teachers prioritise disadvantaged students in teacher circulation, live marking, book/folder checks, checks on response to feedback etc</p> <p>They mark the work of disadvantaged students first with a focus on clear, actionable targets.</p>	<p>According to the EEF review of the evidence on written marking, the use of targets to make marking as specific and actionable as possible is likely to increase pupil progress.</p> <p>Pupils are unlikely to benefit from marking unless some time is set aside to enable pupils to consider and respond to marking.</p>	<p>1,2, 3, 4, 5</p>
<p>Regular 'Best Practice Briefings' share successful strategies in meeting the needs of disadvantaged students, including some facilitated by Pupil Premium Champion. These remind staff about their moral imperative to support pupil premium students appropriately.</p> <p>Updates provided to staff regarding data trends for disadvantaged students to inform their practice and strategies.</p>	<p>Some disadvantaged students do not make as rapid progress as non-disadvantaged students so strategies and interventions need to be planned, reviewed and amended regularly.</p> <p>According to the DfE Standards for teachers' professional development, professional development is most effective when activities form part of a sustained programme. Outstanding classroom practice used with disadvantaged students has been identified and shared with practitioners in a sustained way.</p> <p>The National Forum on Education Statistics (2012) Guide to Taking Action with Education Data, includes five primary phases or activities: 1. Seek information. 2. Access/gather data. 3. Analyse/interpret data. 4. Act. 5. Evaluate.</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4, 5,</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £24,383

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Student Support/One to one support with learning mentors	Research suggests that happier students achieve better results and looking after mental health of students should be a priority.	6, 7
Enhance the careers Support Programme – Unifrog has been introduced with 6 th form with the intention of using these resources further down the school.	<p>This will encourage a long-term view of career progression and will culminate in support with CV writing in Tutorials and an individual Careers interview for all Year 11 students with feedback from a qualified and independent Careers Advisor. All students will be involved in an Enterprise event for Year 9 and a two week work experience for Year 10.</p> <p>Careers support is well known to be a key element of raising aspirations amongst young people. Pupils across all key stages will also have meaningful interactions with employers from a range of careers.</p> <p>Speakers for Schools have come into speak to different year groups to expand their understanding of different careers and raise aspirations of all students.</p>	5, 6, 7
Bespoke "Exam Readiness" Mentoring	Pastoral team provide Year 11 PP students with one-to-one "academic coaching" specifically focused on revision, organisation and stress management.	1,2,3,4,5

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

Budgeted cost: £35,018

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Embedding principles of good practice set out in DfE's <u>Improving School Attendance</u> advice.	The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced persistent absence levels.	4,8
Pastoral Support – Learning Mentors, Counsellors, (Provision of Learning Mentors and Counsellors has been increased during and post lockdown)	Attendance Officer and Heads of Key Stage and Deputy Heads of Key Stage are in post and oversee the needs of each PP student. They will identify the individual needs of each PP student and ensure the school response is focused on identified needs and interventions.	6, 7,8
Provide a wide range of extracurricular activities and opportunities.	Individual pupils supported with music lessons and voluntary trips to increase cultural capital.	5
Provide Leadership and Outreach Opportunities for our pupils.	Pupil premium pupils are encouraged to take part in leadership and outreach opportunities. PP students are prioritised for any additional opportunities such as the Voices for Equality Programme.	6
In-School Study Facilities – To ensure there is access to in-school computing and library facilities before school, during break and lunch and after school. Chromebooks are available for pupils with limited computer access at home.	This will enable PP students to freely access these facilities in a safe environment with adult supervision. The school will also employ the 'Pupil Premium First' approach where PP students are targeted in preference to others in normal classroom activities.	5,6
Contingency fund for acute issues.	Based on our experiences and those of 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.	All

Total budgeted cost: £81,401

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 2024 to 2025 academic year.

The latest attainment data(FFT) indicates that in both core subjects, our pupil premium pupils cohort (Cohort size: 11) has achieved results significantly above the national average for disadvantaged students:

- Mathematics (2025): Our score of 14.5 is more than double the national disadvantaged average of 6.9. This is classified as "Above (sig+)".
- English (2025): Our score of 15.1 is nearly double the national disadvantaged average of 7.8. This is also classified as "Above (sig+)".

The provision of Student Support has increased in capacity this year and the number of Pupil Premium students receiving support is higher than that of non-pupil premium students.

In school supervised study facilities and the opportunity for pupils to borrow chrome books for homework has improved the equality of access to technology. Financial support for trips and Individual support with music lessons and voluntary trips have enabled all pupils to access the opportunities available to pupils at St Michaels.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
Voices for Equality	Anne Frank Trust
Online Mentoring Programme	Spotlight
Individual Tutoring	MyTutor

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

Measure	Details
How did you spend your service pupil premium allocation last academic year?	N/A
What was the impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils?	N/A

Further information (optional)

Outreach work – to attract more Pupil Premium students to this selective school.

St Michael's was successful in the first round of the Selective Schools Expansion Fund (SSEF) this has led to us moving from a three to a four-form entry school. We altered our admissions policy to give an advantage to Pupil Premium students – they do not need to do as well in our entrance test to gain a place and 32 places each year are reserved for Pupil Premium students (please refer to the Admissions Policy on the school website for further details). We currently have expanded in all year groups. This policy change has resulted in a significant increase in the numbers of Pupil Premium students.

In order to attract eligible Pupil Premium students, the school is involved in a number of outreach opportunities for students in local schools (with an emphasis upon disadvantage), this includes the following (either planned or done previously): Summer school (incorporating Maths and English support), visits to feeder schools, Year 12 volunteering as reading buddies, information event and tour/familiarisation with entrance tests (just for PP families), Maths/English/Science booster days, dance classes and MFL outreach for local primary schools.