



**St Nicholas**  
**Catholic Primary School**  
**Pupil Premium Strategy Statement**  
**2025-2026**

## **Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan**

### **Statement of intent**

We have high aspirations and ambitions for our pupils and we believe that no child should be left behind. We are committed to ensuring that our pupils are given every chance to realise their full potential and achieve their best, making good progress and achieving high attainment across all subject areas. The focus of our pupil premium strategy is to support disadvantaged pupils to achieve that goal, including progress for those who are already high attainers.

When making decisions about using pupil premium funding it is important to consider the context of our school and the subsequent challenges faced. 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 (research conducted by the EEF and research from The Sutton Trust will also inform our choices about effective strategies) and at the same time will benefit the non-disadvantaged pupils in our school. Implicit in the intended outcomes detailed below, is the intention that non-disadvantaged pupils' attainment will be sustained and improved alongside progress of their disadvantaged peers.

Common barriers to learning for our disadvantaged children can be: less support at home, weaker language and communication skills, lack of confidence, more frequent social and emotional difficulties 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".

Our approach will be responsive to these 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.

### **Principles**

- We will ensure that quality first teaching and learning opportunities meet the needs of all pupils and that disadvantaged learners are challenged in the work they are set.
- We will 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.
- We will ensure that we act early to intervene, at the point need is identified.
- 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. We will therefore allocate the Pupil premium funding to support any pupil or group of pupils the school has legitimately identified as being disadvantaged.

- We will adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of what these children can achieve. It is key that they are involved in the analysis of data and identification of pupils to ensure maximum effectiveness.

### Context of the School 2025-26

St Nicholas Catholic Primary School serves a culturally diverse urban community, with 313 pupils and a growing enrolment. Currently, 50.36% of our students speak English as an additional language, with 38 languages spoken across the school. While our community faces socio-economic challenges—Gipton being among the 10% most deprived areas nationally—we are committed to providing a supportive and enriching learning environment for all.

Since 2016, the school has been operating as a 1.5-form entry with a Pupil Admission Number of 45. Reception classes are co-taught, while the rest of the school consists of a mix of single-age and mixed-age classes. We also support families with a Breakfast Club, which currently serves 63 children.

Our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) children often enter with below-average language and personal development skills, with only 5 out of 46 children 'on track' in 2021. To address this, we employ a speech and language therapist who visits weekly, ensuring targeted intervention from the start.

Attendance is strong, currently at 97.2% (Oct 2025). Currently 27.5% of our students receive SEND support, this equates to 69 pupils and 9 children hold EHCP plans. Our SEND team has dedicated time to focus on supporting these children and improving learning outcomes.

We are proud of our partnerships with St Anthony's Primary Learning Partnership and local universities, where we train future teachers and provide work experience opportunities. Our community support includes a Catholic Care worker, Mindmate partnership and support from local community hubs such as Gipton Fire Station. We have a Nurture 'pod' for vulnerable children, with rising referrals to support services.

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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

### School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	313
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	21.4%

Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers ( <b>3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year</b> )	2024-2026
Date this statement was published	November 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2026
Statement authorised by	Jane Burns
Pupil premium lead	Jane Burns / Nicky Fox
Governor / Trustee lead	Dee Jones

### Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£115,310
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years ( <i>enter £0 if not applicable</i> )	£0
<b>Total budget for this academic year</b> <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>	£115,310

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#### Challenges: Barriers to learning at St Nicholas Catholic Primary

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

Challenge	Detail of challenge
A	Limited communication, vocabulary, oracy levels, reading and writing (especially in EYFS and KS1) with limited language support from home
B	Limited first-hand experiences to support language and knowledge (impacting the wider curriculum)
C	Limited mathematical language and fluency
D	To address the gaps in attainment for disadvantaged pupils
E	Significant deprivation limiting range of first-hand experiences or limiting access to digital devices to support learning
F	Mental Health/wellbeing /nurture needed- continued side effect of COVID

## Intended outcomes

This explains the outcomes we are aiming for **by the end of our strategy plan**, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved. The outcomes are for all our pupils but the aim is that our PP children will close the gap between themselves and their peers (if one exists).

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Improved oral language skills, vocabulary oracy levels, reading and writing among disadvantaged pupils.	ARE gains in attainment for all PP children in EYFS means children will demonstrate accelerated progress towards or meeting ARE by end of year across most ELGs
Accelerated closing of attainment gaps for disadvantaged pupils	KS2 reading outcomes in 2024/25 show that more than 80% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard.  Achieve at or above national average progress scores in KS2 Reading.
To accelerate the progress in reading, writing and Maths for disadvantaged pupils	The number of PP children achieving ARE (or above) in Reading increases from 2024 baseline.  The number of PP children achieving ARE (or above) in maths increases from 2024 baseline.
Accelerate improvement in GLD data for disadvantaged pupils.	Monitoring the half termly progress of PP children to make sure they are progressing towards ARE by end of year across most ELGs – making sure curriculum / resources / interventions such as NELI accelerate progress.
To close the gaps for children who have SEND and are pupil premium	That pupils are closely monitored so that the impact of targeted interventions is reviewed to make sure they are working and that the children are progressing.
To close the gaps for children who have EAL and are pupil premium	That the children follow an EAL intervention that helps the children overcome the barriers that might impede their learning due to language issues.
For more resilient and confident learners	Sustained high levels of wellbeing from demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catholic Care access to be continued</li> <li>• Wellbeing/Mind mate to be continued and accessed by all</li> <li>• Nurture interventions for the children (particularly PP) who need it the most.</li> </ul>

To continue to achieve and sustain high attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Ensure that attendance of disadvantaged pupils is above 96%
To explore and encourage the representation of disadvantaged learners in across pupil voice and extra-curricular activities.	A variety of children have the opportunity to be a part of a group within school that enables pupil voice. An audit of extra-curricular activities to ensure PP children have access to this within school.

### Activity in this academic year

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

### Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £ 55,740

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Chatter bugs - Speech and Language assessments with traded therapist.  Training of more LSAs to continue the work of the speech and language therapist  Chatter bugs = £16,630	<i>There is a strong evidence base (EEF Oral Language Interventions) that suggests oral language interventions, including dialogic activities such as high-quality classroom discussion, are inexpensive to implement with high impacts on reading.</i>  EEF Guidance Document: Oral Language Interventions Oral Language Interventions – Toolkit Strand - EEF	A, C
Teacher Wage; SCh Third teacher for Foundation stage for smaller group work to accelerate progress.  Teacher wage = £38,034	<i>Evidence indicates that high quality teaching is the most powerful way for schools to improve pupil attainment, especially for socio-economically disadvantaged pupils.</i>  EEF teaching and learning toolkit EEF Guidance reports	A, B, C, D, F
Mark Assessment/ Shine intervention package Assessing and producing specific	<i>Targeted and academic support can support pupil progress and can be employed to help boost language development, literacy, or numeracy as well as other subject areas.</i>	A, B, C, D

<p>interventions for group or 1 to 1 intervention.</p> <p>Cost = £1,076</p>	<p><i>Interventions should be carefully linked to classroom teaching and matched to individual pupils' specific needs while not inhibiting their access to the wider curriculum.</i></p> <p>EEF Teaching and learning toolkit</p>	
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**Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)**

Budgeted cost: £ 34,317

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>To increase ARE and GD across Reading, writing and Maths through quality intervention and tutoring. KS2</p> <p>(Continued training this year specific focus on writing)</p> <p>A parttime HLTA is employed to run catch-up programs;</p> <p>Fresh Start- Year 5 onwards; Phonics and reading</p> <p>Maths Cath up program this continues throughout lunchtime until 1:30 PM.</p> <p>Wage = £14,261</p>	<p>Ongoing interventions to close /fill gaps, increase confidence and have rapid catch up for all children but particularly the PP.</p> <p><i>Small group intervention <b>targeted</b> at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind, both one-to-one and small groups.</i></p> <p><i>One to one tuition: Studies in England have shown that pupils eligible for free school meals typically receive additional benefits from one-to-one tuition. Low attaining pupils are particularly likely to benefit.)</i></p> <p><i>Small group tuition: Studies in England have shown that pupils eligible for free school meals typically receive additional benefits from small group tuition.</i></p> <p><i>EEF One to one tuition Toolkit Strand</i></p> <p><i>EEF Small group tuition Toolkit Strand</i></p>	<p>A, B, C, D.</p>

<p>To close the gap in communication/ speech and language for those children who come into school with under-developed spoken language skills using the NELI programme.</p> <p>Foundation TA / NELI facilitator PP</p> <p>Wage = £10,387</p>	<p><b>There is strong evidence from the EEF report on oral language that the NELI programme had a positive impact on the language skills of the children involved. Children receiving the 30-week programme experienced the equivalent of about 4 month's additional progress, compared with about 2 months additional progress for the 20-week version.</b></p> <p><b>Evidence:</b>  <i>Nuffield Early Language Intervention Programme recommended by DfE</i></p> <p><i>EEF Guidance Document: Nuffield Early Language Intervention</i></p>	<p>A, B, C</p>
<p>RWI Lead cover 2 hours a week phonics coaching</p> <p>Wage; £1,953</p>	<p><i>Mentoring and coaching can be an important source of support, particularly for Early career teachers. Schools should carefully consider the core components that make these strategies effective when developing their approach.</i></p> <p>EEF Effective professional development  EEF Effective mechanisms of Professional development  The National Institute of teaching's Mentoring and coaching of teachers.</p>	<p>A, B, C, D.</p>
<p>Online Learning platform; Flash Academy. An English assessment and learning platform that teaches social and curricular English language to EAL learners.</p> <p>Cost = £3,762</p>	<p>Effective EAL strategies as recommended by the EEF include using visuals and scaffolding, front loading vocabulary, and ensuring explicit instruction. Other approaches involve supporting the use of home languages, integrating technology.</p>	<p>A, B, C, D</p>
<p>Online learning platforms for use at home and during the school holidays e.g.; TTRS, Mathletics, Spag.com.</p> <p>Cost = £3,954</p>	<p>To improve learning, schools should consider the specific barriers technology is addressing – particularly for disadvantaged students – and use technology in a way that is informed by effective pedagogy.</p> <p>EEF Using Digital Technology to improve learning.</p>	<p>C, D</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £25,253

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Forest Schools A child centred learning process providing learner inspired hands on experiences in the natural environment. It's creative and can increase a child's confidence as they problem solve and learn to manage risks.</p> <p>Cost = £1200</p>	<p>Social and emotional skills support effective learning and are linked to positive outcomes later in life. Schools may consider whole class approaches as well as targeted interventions, monitoring the impact of these choices carefully.</p> <p>EEF improving social and emotional learning and behaviour interventions.</p>	<p>A, B, C, D, E.</p>
<p>To continue to support our vulnerable families and pupil's emotional wellbeing- use of Nurture, Enhanced Mind mate activities.</p> <p>Catholic Care cost = £10,703</p>	<p><b>Catholic Care full day a week to support the SEMH of our most vulnerable pupils</b> <b>Enhance SEMH</b></p> <p><b>Evidence:</b> <i>Social and Emotional learning Toolkit Strand - EEF</i></p>	<p>E</p>
<p>To provide financial support to our disadvantaged families by subsidizing trips and residential that enhance our curriculum.</p> <p>Subsidized trips so far = £ 1,592</p> <p>Projected subsidized trips for the rest of the academic (Some with specific writing stimulus for disadvantaged pupils.) year = £ 2077</p>	<p><b>This provision is to pay for things like school trips, visitors, residential and the minibuses which enable us to enhance the curriculum for all our pupils but especially those who cannot afford to pay for these curriculum enhancement activities. The ethos for this is highlighted in our Curriculum Vision as well as in the planning for the wider curriculum.</b></p> <p><b>The provision of minibuses and minibus driver's enable us to take our pupils out of school to enhance their life experiences and their learning.</b></p> <p><b>Evidence:</b> <i>EEF: Improving Behaviour in Schools Key Recommendation 2: Teach Learning Behaviours</i></p>	<p>A, B, D, E.</p>

<p><b>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.</b></p>		
<p>Dedicated office member of staff to monitor attendance and the attendance of disadvantaged children. Safeguarding trained – hold meetings to action PAs</p> <p>Wage; £11,273</p>	<p><b>Attendance</b></p> <p>To make sure Attendance for disadvantaged pupils remains high and above national levels. To remain consistent and any issues identified early to ensure pupils benefit fully from teaching and enrichment opportunities.</p> <p><b>Children need to be in school to achieve.</b></p>	<p>A, B, C, D, F</p>

**Total budgeted cost: £ 115,310**