

Pupil premium strategy statement St Nicholas Catholic Primary School (October 2026)

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	309
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	23.37%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year)	2024-2027
Date this statement was published	October 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	October 2027
Statement authorised by	J. Burns
Pupil premium lead	N. Fox
Governor / Trustee lead	D. Jones

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£114,920
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (<i>enter £0 if not applicable</i>)	£0
Total budget for this academic year <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>	£114,920

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.

Challenges

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 current strategy plan**, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Improved oral language, vocabulary and early literacy among disadvantaged pupils in EYFS and KS1	On-entry and ongoing assessment (Chatterbugs, NELI) and observation show improved oral language and vocabulary for disadvantaged pupils, triangulated with engagement in lessons and work in books. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving GLD rises each year from the 2025-26 baseline, and the gap to their peers narrows.
A narrower in-school gap in writing between disadvantaged pupils and their peers	By July 2027, the in-school gap in pupils meeting the expected standard in KS2 writing narrows. Moderation confirms the accuracy of writing judgements for disadvantaged pupils.
Sustained high attainment in reading and maths for disadvantaged pupils	The percentages of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in KS2 reading and in maths rise from the 2025-26 baseline and stay above national figures for disadvantaged pupils. Combined RWM for disadvantaged pupils stays above the

	national disadvantaged average. More disadvantaged pupils reach greater depth in reading, in line with the whole-school target.
Disadvantaged pupils with SEND make strong progress from their starting points	Termly Individual Provision Map reviews show most pupils meeting their targets. Interventions that show no impact are changed within a half term.
Disadvantaged pupils with EAL quickly become proficient enough in English that language is no longer a barrier to learning	EAL proficiency assessments show at least one stage of progress per year. Attainment is in line with that of other disadvantaged pupils.
Improved wellbeing, resilience and confidence for all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils	Sustained high levels of wellbeing from 2026-27, shown by pupil and parent surveys and pupil voice. Pre- and post-intervention measures show positive impact for pupils accessing Catholic Care, MindMate and nurture support.
High attendance sustained for all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils	Disadvantaged pupils' attendance is at or above 96%, and the gap to their peers narrows. Persistent absence among disadvantaged pupils falls to below, in line with the whole-school target of under 4% (from 6.1%).
Disadvantaged pupils are fully represented in pupil leadership and enrichment	An extra-curricular audit is completed in Autumn 2026. Disadvantaged pupils take part in clubs and pupil voice groups (School Council, Mini Vinnies, Chaplaincy Team) at least in proportion to their share of the roll.

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: £ **69,998.63**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Third teacher in the Foundation Stage so children can be taught in smaller groups, with more precise teaching of early language, literacy and maths for	High-quality teaching is the most powerful lever schools have for improving outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Smaller groups have most impact when they allow teachers to change how they teach, through more feedback and closer interaction. <i>EEF Guide to the Pupil</i>	A, B, C, D, F

disadvantaged pupils. Cost:£30,804	<i>Premium; EEF Toolkit: Reducing Class Size; EEF Early Years Toolkit</i>	
Extra teacher in upper Key Stage 2 so children can be taught in smaller groups, with more precise teaching of reading, writing and maths for disadvantaged pupils. Cost:£36,262	High-quality teaching is the most powerful lever schools have for improving outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Smaller groups have most impact when they allow teachers to change how they teach, through more feedback and closer interaction. <i>EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium; EEF Toolkit: Reducing Class Size; EEF Early Years Toolkit</i>	A, B, C, D, F
RWI lead coaching (2 hours per week) so phonics teaching is consistent and of high quality across the school, particularly for less experienced staff. It includes modelling, observation and feedback. Cost: £1,953	Systematic synthetic phonics has a strong evidence base for early reading (around +5 months). Coaching that includes modelling, feedback and monitoring is a key mechanism of effective professional development. <i>DfE Reading Framework; EEF Toolkit: Phonics; EEF Effective Professional Development</i>	A, B, C, D
Test base assessment and interventions: standardised assessment analysis identifies each pupil's gaps and produces targeted group or 1:1 intervention. For disadvantaged pupils with SEND, interventions are reviewed termly through Individual Provision Maps, and any that are not working are changed. Cost: £415	Interventions work best when they are carefully matched to accurate assessment of need, linked to classroom teaching, and do not reduce access to the wider curriculum. <i>EEF Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (Recs 2 and 4); EEF Toolkit: Small Group Tuition</i>	A, B, C, D
Writing CPD and moderation: continued staff training focused on writing, including colourful semantics in Year 1 to support sentence construction and adapted Literacy Tree units. Training and implementation of targeted writing programs. Feedback is focused on	Writing improves when composition strategies are explicitly modelled and practised with support, and when transcription becomes fluent. High-quality feedback adds around +6 months. External moderation keeps teacher assessment of disadvantaged pupils accurate. <i>EEF Improving Literacy in KS1 and KS2; EEF Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning; EEF Toolkit: Feedback</i>	[writing challenge]

disadvantaged pupils' writing, and there is termly writing moderation, including at least one cluster session. Cost: £564.63		
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £ **£25,338**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
KS2 catch-up through a part-time HLTA: this raises the number of disadvantaged pupils at the expected standard and greater depth in reading, writing and maths. It includes intervention for phonics and reading, a lunchtime maths catch-up running until 1:30pm, and, this year, small-group writing support for disadvantaged pupils not on track to reach the expected standard. Cost: £18,289	Small-group and one-to-one tuition are effective for pupils who are falling behind (around +4 and +5 months respectively). Studies in England show that pupils eligible for free school meals typically gain additional benefit. <i>EEF Toolkit: One to One Tuition; EEF Toolkit: Small Group Tuition</i>	A, B, C, D
NELI (Nuffield Early Language Intervention) delivered by a trained TA. This closes the gap for children who start school with under-developed spoken language. Cost: £1,927	NELI is funded by the DfE for Reception classes. EEF trials found that children made around three months' additional progress in language skills, with larger gains for children eligible for free school meals. <i>EEF evaluation: Nuffield Early Language Intervention</i>	A, B, C
Flash Academy: an assessment and	Effective EAL practice includes visuals and scaffolding, pre-teaching	A, B, C, D

learning platform that teaches social and curriculum English to EAL learners. It is used alongside EAL proficiency assessment to track each disadvantaged EAL pupil's progress. Cost: £4,071	vocabulary, explicit language instruction, valuing home languages and well-targeted technology. <i>EEF/University of Oxford: English as an Additional Language – A Review of the Evidence; The Bell Foundation EAL Assessment Framework</i>	
Online learning platforms for home and holiday use (TTRS, Ed shed, SPaG.com). Disadvantaged pupils' usage is monitored half-termly. Cost: £1,051	Technology has most impact when it addresses a specific barrier and follows effective teaching practice, such as building fluency through retrieval practice. Well-designed homework adds around +3 months at primary. <i>EEF Using Digital Technology to Improve Learning; EEF Toolkit: Homework</i>	C, D

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

Budgeted cost: £19,583.37

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Forest School: child-led, hands-on learning outdoors that builds confidence, resilience, problem-solving and the ability to manage risk. Resourcing and part payment for PP children Cost: £2,102.37	Social and emotional skills support effective learning and are linked to positive outcomes later in life. Outdoor learning can build self-confidence and perseverance. <i>EEF Improving Social and Emotional Learning in Primary Schools; EEF Toolkit: Outdoor Adventure Learning</i>	Forest School: child-led, hands-on learning outdoors that builds confidence, resilience, problem-solving and the ability to manage risk.
Enrichment and pupil voice: trips, residential and visitors are subsidised (including minibs costs) so disadvantaged pupils can take part fully, with some trips chosen as stimuli for writing. An extra-curricular audit (Autumn 2026) will	Shared experiences give pupils vocabulary, background knowledge and stimuli that support reading and writing. Participation in enrichment and arts activities is linked to improved attainment and engagement, and disadvantaged pupils are less likely to access these opportunities without support. <i>EEF Toolkit: Arts Participation; EEF Toolkit: Outdoor Adventure Learning; DfE</i>	Enrichment and pupil voice: trips, residential and visitors are subsidised (including minibs costs) so disadvantaged pupils can take part fully, with some trips chosen as stimuli for writing. An extra-

track disadvantaged pupils' participation in clubs and their representation in pupil leadership groups (School Council, Mini Vinnies, Chaplaincy Team). A small contingency is held so the school can respond quickly to needs not yet identified. Cost: £1,467 so far plus a projected cost for the rest of the academic year: £ 1,410	<i>Using Pupil Premium guidance; St Nicholas Curriculum Vision</i>	curricular audit (Autumn 2026) will track disadvantaged pupils' participation in clubs and their representation in pupil leadership groups (School Council, Mini Vinnies, Chaplaincy Team). A small contingency is held so the school can respond quickly to needs not yet identified.
Dedicated attendance officer, safeguarding trained. They make first-day absence calls, analyse disadvantaged pupils' attendance and persistent absence half-termly, and hold attendance meetings and panels with families to act on persistent absence early. Cost: £14,604	Pupils need to be in school to benefit from teaching and enrichment. Schools are expected to monitor attendance data closely, build strong relationships with families and offer targeted support early. Responsive, targeted approaches and parental engagement show the most promise. <i>DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance (statutory guidance, 2024); EEF Attendance Interventions: Rapid Evidence Assessment</i>	Dedicated attendance officer, safeguarding trained. They make first-day absence calls, analyse disadvantaged pupils' attendance and persistent absence half-termly, and hold attendance meetings and panels with families to act on persistent absence early.

Total budgeted cost: £114,920

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Overall attainment of disadvantaged pupils

Disadvantaged pupils continue to achieve well compared with disadvantaged pupils nationally. In 2025-26, 53.3% met the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined. Across 2023-24 and 2024-25, they outperformed national disadvantaged pupils by around 10 percentage points (56.4% against 46.5%). Writing is now a named priority in both the School Development Plan and this strategy to close the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers.

Targeted academic support

MARK post-test analysis and Shine interventions were used to match support more precisely to individual gaps and to link it closely to classroom teaching. Tutoring, KS2 HLTA catch-up and small-group support were targeted at disadvantaged pupils not on track. In-school tracking shows that disadvantaged pupils receiving catch-up made expected or better progress.

Oral language and early years

GLD across the cohort rose to 69.8% in 2025-26, continuing an improving trend, 37% of disadvantaged children achieved GLD, 87% of disadvantaged children achieved the Communication and Language ELGs, compared with 50% in 2024-25. NELI and Chatterbugs helped narrow early language gaps for children starting school with under-developed spoken language. Forest School supported vocabulary and collaborative talk through practical problem-solving. Early language remains a priority because many children start school well below age-related expectations.

Reading

87% of Year 1 pupils passed the phonics screening check, including 62% of disadvantaged pupils. Year 2 re-take is now an SDP priority. At KS2, 66.7% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard in reading. Reading continues to remain a whole-school development focus, our three-year average (75.5%) sits just above national (74.9%).

Maths

73.3% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard in KS2 maths, above national figures for disadvantaged pupils. Maths is a whole-school strength, with a three-year average of 83% against 74% nationally.

Writing

Writing across the school is strong and externally moderated, with a three-year average of 77.3% against 72.7% nationally, disadvantaged pupils made progress and met the expected standard, although there is a gap between the achievement of non-disadvantaged and disadvantaged - this strategy now targets narrowing the gap by July 2027.

Pupils with SEND

A dedicated SEND team and strengthened Individual Provision Map reviews have improved how closely the provision for disadvantaged pupils with SEND is monitored and adapted. Termly reviews show that the majority of IPM targets were met. Evidence of impact is currently mostly qualitative, so pre- and post-intervention data will be used from 2026-27.

Pupils with EAL

With 35.8% of pupils speaking English as an additional language, Flash Academy supported disadvantaged EAL learners in developing social and curriculum English. Proficiency tracking will be used as a success measure from 2026-27.

Wellbeing

Disadvantaged pupils continued to access Catholic Care (one day a week), nurture provision and enhanced MindMate activities. Staff, pupils and parents report improved resilience, relationships and engagement. This feedback is positive but mainly qualitative, so structured pre- and post-measures will be introduced in 2026-27.

Attendance

Attendance for disadvantaged pupils was 96.7% in Autumn term 2025-26, against 92.4% nationally. Persistent absence across the school was 6.1%, which is above the school's own target. Reducing it to below 4% is now an SDP priority.

Enrichment

Subsidised trips, residentials and minibus use meant disadvantaged pupils could take part fully in enrichment such as ballet, the planetarium and Bikeability, residentials. Participation and pupil voice were not tracked systematically, so an extra-curricular audit will take place in Autumn 2026.

Intended outcome	Success criteria	Evidence of impact (2025-26)	Evaluation / next steps
Improved oral language skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils	Disadvantaged pupils in EYFS make accelerated progress, with the majority meeting the expected level across most ELGs	GLD (all pupils) 69.8%. Disadvantaged pupils: GLD 37% Communication and Language 87%. (50% in 2024-25). NELI and Chatterbugs narrowed early language gaps.	Met / Partially met Continue NELI and Chatterbugs, and train more LSAs. Track the disadvantaged GLD gap to peers as the key measure.
Improved reading attainment among disadvantaged pupils	More disadvantaged pupils meet the expected standard in KS2 reading	Disadvantaged pupils at the expected standard: 66.7%. Greater depth (all pupils) 27%. Phonics: 87% (disadvantaged 62%).	Met / Ongoing Continue phonics coaching and Fresh Start. Raise Year 2 re-take outcomes and greater depth reading. (SDP Priority 4).
Improved maths attainment for disadvantaged pupils at KS2	Number of disadvantaged pupils at the expected standard or above increases on the previous year	Disadvantaged pupils at the expected standard: 73.3%, above national disadvantaged. Whole-school three-year average 83.3%.	Met / Sustained Maintain small-group tuition. Focus on greater depth.
Disadvantaged pupils with SEND make progress and gaps close	Targeted interventions reviewed for impact; pupils make progress across the curriculum	SEND team and strengthened IPM reviews in place. IPM targets met.	Partially met / Ongoing Provision is stronger, but the impact data is limited. Use pre- and post-intervention data from 2026-27.
High levels of wellbeing and emotional support for pupils and families, particularly disadvantaged pupils	Disadvantaged pupils access Catholic Care, MindMate, nurture and therapeutic support	Catholic Care, nurture, MindMate and cluster therapeutic support delivered. Positive feedback from pupils, staff and families. Forest	Met / Ongoing Impact evidence is mainly qualitative. Introduce pre- and post-measures and pupil surveys.

		School built resilience and confidence.	
Sustained high attendance, particularly for disadvantaged pupils	Disadvantaged attendance above 96%	Disadvantaged attendance 96.7% against 92.4% (Autumn Term 2025/26) nationally. Persistent absence across the school 6.1%.	Met / Ongoing for attendance, but persistent absence is above target. Reduce it to below 4% (SDP Priority 8).
Equal access to enrichment and the wider curriculum	Disadvantaged pupils take part fully in trips, residential and enrichment	Trips and residential subsidised for disadvantaged pupils. Minibuses enabled full participation. [2025-26 examples].	Met/ Ongoing Continue subsidies. Carry out an extra-curricular audit and track pupil voice representation in Autumn 2026.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
Catholic Care	Diocese of Leeds
Speech and Language	Chatterbugs
Forest Schools	The Forest Schools
Online Programs	3P Learning
Flash Academy	
Group work interventions (SEMH)	Mindmate
Residential / Trips	PGL.Nell Bank, Herd Farm, West Leeds Activity Centre

Service pupil premium funding

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information: How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year
• Nurture and pastoral support: regular check-ins with a trusted adult and access to nurture provision, giving pupils a safe space to talk about worries linked to a parent's absence. • Daily reading with an adult: one-to-one reading that builds fluency and confidence and provides consistent daily contact with a familiar adult. • Key worker support in core subjects: targeted in-class and small-group support in English and maths, when needed. • Additional learning resources: materials matched to individual needs to support learning in school and at home as appropriate.
The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils

- Pupils were settled and engaged in school, including during periods of parental deployment, and staff and parents reported [improved confidence / emotional wellbeing].
- All eligible pupils made expected or better progress in reading, writing and maths from their starting points.
- Daily reading supported - improved reading fluency and confidence, with reading ages rising
- Attendance for service pupils- pupil A was 99% and pupil B was 95% for the last academic year.

