



St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Buckfast

Pupil premium strategy statement

2024-2027- Reviewed November 2025

I was a disadvantaged child from a non-educated family, yet I had the advantage of being in the company of great teachers. [A. P. J. Abdul Kalam](#)

"Every one of our children is carrying something the world is waiting for – it's just the world hasn't got it yet," Sister Judith Russi

The Pupil Premium is a government initiative that provides additional funding to support pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. Research shows that these pupils often underachieve compared to their peers, and there is a strong correlation between eligibility for free school meals (FSM) and lower academic achievement.

The Pupil Premium aims to help schools improve the attainment of disadvantaged children and reduce the achievement gap between the highest and lowest achievers. The government uses pupils' entitlement to free school meals and children looked after by the local authority (CLA) as key indicators of deprivation.

Funding is allocated based on:

- The number of pupils on roll who have been eligible for FSM at any point in the last six years (known as 'Ever6 FSM'),
- Each pupil who has been 'Looked After' (in care), and
- A smaller allocation for children of service families

Principles

- To ensure that teaching and learning opportunities meet the needs of all pupils.
- To 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.
- 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 for free school meals. We reserve the right to allocate the Pupil Premium funding to support any pupil, or groups of pupils the schools have legitimately identified as being socially disadvantaged.
- Pupil Premium funding will be allocated following a needs analysis which will identify priority groups or individuals. Limited funding and resources mean that not all children receiving free school meals will be in receipt of pupil premium

interventions at one time.

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2025 to 2026 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 Mary's Catholic Primary School
Number of pupils in school	Update pupil numbers (163 including N1 & N2) and 44 % PP 166 (as of January 2025 – including our nursery)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	44% (50% of Pupil Premium Children have SEND)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended)	2024-2025 2025-2026 2026-2027
Date this statement was published	November 1 st 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 1 st 2026
Statement authorised by	Mrs Sophie Kerswell Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Mrs Sophie Kerswell Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	Lesley Clark and Samantha Ansell Inclusion Governors

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 78,082
EYPP Funding	£1,497
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
TOTAL	£78,082

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Buckfast Pupil Premium Statement of Intent

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Buckfast, we are committed to ensuring that all pupils make good progress and achieve well across the curriculum. High-quality teaching, a well-sequenced and effective curriculum, and access to appropriate resources form the foundation of our approach.

Our strategy focuses on understanding the unique needs of every child, identifying barriers to success, and creating a whole-school approach that ensures every pupil can thrive. Through small group work, individual support, and targeted interventions, we provide bespoke academic and pastoral support to meet the specific needs of our pupils.

In addition to academic support, we recognise the importance of addressing other barriers to learning. By providing tailored support for pupils and their families, we aim to create an environment where every child can achieve their full potential.

Our Vision

At St Mary's, our intention is that all pupils, regardless of their background or the challenges they face, make accelerated progress and attain highly across all subject areas. We aim to:

- Inspire and motivate all Pupil Premium pupils to develop a lifelong love of learning.
- Ensure that all children have access to a broad, balanced curriculum enriched with opportunities to maximise their cultural capital.
- Provide targeted interventions and support to improve progress and attainment.
- Focus on high-quality teaching, particularly in areas where disadvantaged pupils require the most support, as this is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the attainment gap.
- Foster a culture of shared responsibility, where all staff take ownership of disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and maintain high expectations of what they can achieve.

Strategic Use of Funding

The effective and strategic use of Pupil Premium funding is integral to helping us achieve our goals. We are dedicated to ensuring that this funding reaches the pupils for whom it is intended and has a significant, positive impact on their education and well-being.

Our Objectives:

- **Close the attainment gap** between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.
- **Accelerate progress** to ensure all pupils can meet or exceed national expectations.
- **Support and nurture pupils**, building resilience to help them manage emotional and other life challenges.

By investing in high-quality teaching, targeted interventions, and holistic support, St Mary's aims to create a supportive and inclusive environment where every pupil can succeed and flourish.

Challenges

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

No.	Detail of challenge
1	At St Mary's, assessments, and observations of pupils in Reception show that disadvantaged pupils have lower on-entry language and communication skills, compared to non-disadvantaged peers (67% of disadvantaged pupils in EYFS, compared to 9% of non-disadvantaged peers over a three-year period).
2	50% of disadvantaged pupils have an identifiable special educational need which may affect progress and attainment in core subjects and across the curriculum. This includes SEMH, speech and language and specific learning difficulties.
3	Some disadvantaged children (59%) have difficulties with emotional regulation, anxiety, or mental health difficulties. This lack of emotional resilience and self-regulation skills can impact on many pupils' ability to be 'ready to learn', to work collaboratively and to accept a degree of challenge in their learning.
4	Social deprivation and social care needs are higher for our pupil premium children with 46% of our pupil premium and FSM families receiving additional support from external services such as family support workers, children's services, social workers, speech and language support, school counsellor, or specialist sports coaching, who work in partnership with the school to help overcome barriers to learning. Adequate time for staff professional development, access to training, timetabling and resource management.
5	Some of our families face challenges with supporting learning at home.
6	Some of our disadvantaged pupils have poor attendance which contributes to lower-than-expected academic progress. Pupil Premium children continue to have a lower attendance rate than all children at St Mary's. Engaging families requiring most support. Supporting attendance issues including absence due to medical or mental health challenges.

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
Improve parity in results for reading, writing and maths, between Pupil Premium (PP) and Non Pupil Premium (NPP). Improve the % of PP children achieving greater depth by the end of the year. Focus adult intervention on children who are identified through aspirational KS2 targets. From their starting point, ensure high prior attaining pupils make good progress and to ensure maintained or better end of year attainment. At the end of the school year, they achieve greater depth in subjects identified as being higher achievers in.	Use of metacognitive strategies embedded and evidenced in our school effectiveness observations. Group teaching by highly experienced teachers has successfully improved outcomes for both high achievers and low prior attainers identified from vulnerable groups. Coaching and in-class support has improved teacher's confidence with metacognition in supporting the more able. Half termly data and pupil progress meetings reflect improvement in % of PP children achieving greater depth by the end of the year
An increased proportion of Pupil Premium pupils make accelerated rates of progress in reading, writing and maths. Disadvantaged children who have been identified make accelerated progress. % of PP achieving in line/ exceeds NPP data. Improved Speech and Language skills across EYFS (leading to an improvement of PP children achieving GLD by the end of reception). Targeted children achieve expected standard in Year 1 phonics and Year 2 catch up. Improvement in PP outcomes in KS1, SPAG and writing. Use resources effectively to provide targeted additional support for PP children with SEN.	Evidence based interventions including precision teaching are being utilised effectively throughout the school. These resources have been used well to impact as many children as possible. In Year 1, targeted support for phonics and reading has raised attainment of PP children. Targeted children passed phonics screening by the end of Y2. End of year data and pupil progress meetings reflect % of PP achieving age related expectations is in line with NPP data.

Use resources effectively to provide targeted additional support for PP children with SEN. School attendance rates to exceed that of the national average for primary schools (target set as >96%). Children from vulnerable groups better represented in school trips, enrichment visits and extra-curricular activities. Children from vulnerable groups make accelerated progress to close the gaps left from COVID-19 school closures.	Pupil progress meetings successfully impacting provision planning in all year groups. SENDCo and assessment leads have monitor data throughout the year – this data to show children from vulnerable groups making accelerated progress to close the gaps left from COVID-19 school closures. Attendance monitored regularly by SENDCo, Attendance Officer and HT to ensure appropriate support is in place. Attendance for key children improved.
Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and develop independent learning strategies. High aspiration and expectation are evident in their learning.	Disadvantaged pupils display equal resilience, self-confidence, and achievement with their non- disadvantaged counterparts. Work scrutiny shows high expectations and consistent progress and quality of work in all year groups and all disadvantaged pupil's books. Lesson observations/ pupil observations show outstanding attitudes to learning for all disadvantaged pupils and support in place for those who may find this difficult to achieve.
Help to reduce emotional and mental health and wellbeing barriers to learning (exacerbated by lock- down during pandemic). Ensure pupils have access to targeted support for mental health and wellbeing	Increase in self-esteem, confidence and resilience is reported through evaluations of school counsellor sessions and demonstrate the impact on the interventions.
Work with pupils, families, outside agencies, and teaching staff to ensure a joint approach to improving attendance. Work with EP's and EWO using the Emotionally Bases School Avoidance Support Programme and Trust Action Plans. Working with the whole family – see separate attendance Transformational Target.	Attendance of PP is in line with national average and favourably comparable to attendance of non-pupil premium children. Attendance of pupils with persistent attendance difficulties to remain at least above 90%.

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: £ 18,750

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Build on the successful use of a validated phonics system, to continue to embed our reading programme to support all pupils (especially the disadvantaged and those who are below ARE) to continue to make good progress in reading. Continue this into KS2 with an embedded reading programme and 1:1/1:2 and small group tuition for additional reading comprehension where required (see below). Purchase of new scheme will support this and new books right across the school.	The evidence suggests that children benefit from a balanced approach to literacy that includes a range of approaches. The emphasis of the different approaches will shift as children progress; effective diagnosis can help to identify priorities and focus teaching to ensure EEF evidence suggesting that schools should focus first on developing core classroom teaching strategies that improve the literacy capabilities of the whole class. With this in place, the need for additional support should then decrease. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/guidance-for-teachers/literacy	1, 2
Further embed principles of the Plymouth Oracy Project across the curriculum, to develop pupils' use of language, their ability to express key ideas and to extend their vocabulary. Additionally, use of our own Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) to assess and deliver targeted support at the very earliest point -to support speech and language. Additionally, use of the NELI programme to deliver high quality speech support across the early years and Infant and Junior Speech and Language Link to assess whole class and individual need prior to SALT intervention. Ros Sleath to train the staff on Speech and Language Support for children with Autism and children with SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) needs. One member of staff trained on SALT support for specialist needs. Two members of staff attending SEN TA support diploma over two years- 2024-2026.	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: Oral language interventions Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF Oracy Project to continue across the whole school- threading through ALL curriculum areas.	1, 2, 3

Maths action plan to ensure high quality teaching. Splitting of age groups so classes can be taught as single year groups for maths when possible Use of manipulatives – to embed maths using the 3 Enhancement maths teaching and curriculum planning, in line with DfE and EEF guidance. We will make use of Power Maths to continue to develop the ‘mastery’ approach- where children can move to and from the concrete, pictorial and then abstract stage of thinking to represent their maths understanding. We will fund additional resources and teacher time to embed key elements of guidance in school. Release of Maths lead to support maths delivery across the school and of all teachers and TA's to observe lessons and support each other through a 'coaching' model. Maths Lead training for the NPQBLC – National Professional Qualification for Behaviour, Learning and Culture- in order to support learning behaviour and learning culture across our school.	The DfE non-statutory guidance has been produced in conjunction with the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics, drawing on evidence-based approaches: Maths guidance KS 1 and 2.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk) The EEF guidance is based on a range of the best available evidence: Improving Mathematics in Key Stages 2 and 3	2, 5
Extended mentoring process to be implemented across the school. Rigorous School Effectiveness Programme to continue to support all staff through regular observations (Developmental, Drop In Sessions- DDI's). Use of the coaching model of support. SEMH Lead for Devon supporting staff with SEMH and a solution focused approach to support for children and staff. Continue to implement TISP training and provide high quality CPD throughout the year- based on staff and pupil need. Monitor progress and identify any necessary support through termly pupil progress meetings and staff appraisal process. Continue to provide provision of Focus Groups and small group intervention from most experienced staff. Use of 1:1 Mentor support for our PP Y6 children to ensure that the gap is closed and they have the best opportunity to achieve.	Metacognition and self-assessment was listed in the Teaching and Learning Toolkit by the EEF as being based on extensive research, being very low cost and high impact. EEF guidance report : Effective Professional Development Research from the NFER shows that a whole school ethos of high attainment for all pupils, high quality first teaching and meeting individual needs are the most effective ways to ensure disadvantaged pupil's achieve highly. Using Pupil Premium: guidance for school leaders (September 2023)Endowment Foundation's Teaching and Learning toolkit suggests up to 4 months additional progress with the use of digital technology, to enhance and supplement teaching. It also suggests 4 additional months progress in terms of parental engagement and home learning. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement	2, 5

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

Budgeted cost: £36,525

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Individual and small group teaching and interventions, to address gaps children who were most affected by the pandemic (including SEND and high attainers).	One to one tuition EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) And in small groups: Small group tuition Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	1, 2, 5
Purchase of speech and language assessment and intervention programme (Speech Link and Infant Language Link) to support individual pupils with relatively low speech and language skills. WIDGET scheme purchased to support with access to the curriculum – pictures to support understanding of language.	EEF's Teaching and Learning Toolkit states that an additional 6 months' progress can be achieved through oral language interventions. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions	1, 2
Individual and small group teaching to support those who require catch up in reading comprehension.	Reading at the transition report states that one to one or 2:1 tuition is most effective in closing the gap in reading: https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/documents/guidance/EEF_Publications_EvidenceBrief_ReadingAtTheTransition.pdf?v=1629122_921	1,2

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

Budgeted cost: £ 22,807

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
To monitor the attendance of disadvantaged pupils with AIO and as a result, implement a range of strategies including school counsellor, play therapy, Education Welfare Officer, Educational Psychologist. This will be based on guidance in the DfE's Improving School Attendance advice. Training for staff of EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance) and identifying a lead adult for every persistently absent (90% or below) child and severely absent (50% or below). Training of Attendance Lead in School – to support the headteacher. Training in March 2024. SLT attended a full day's training on EBSA and how to work with new resources to support with this.	In March 2016, the Department for Education (DfE) published a report on the link between absence and attainment in Key Stage (KS) 2 and KS4. The report also highlights that 73% of pupils who have over 95% attendance achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C and explains that pupils with persistent absences are less likely to attain at school. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/framework-for-securing-full-attendance-actions-for-schools-and-local-authorities	4, 5, 6
Use of a professional school counsellor to support children on with their social, emotional, and behavioural needs following COVID 19 lockdown. Work with families to support the needs of the pupil's wider support network, as well as individual intervention in school. School to develop its relational approach embedded in Trauma Informed Schools. Staff to continue to train and new staff to be given accelerated support and understanding of the TISP approach.	In addition to the school's own evidence of impact from previous years, the EEF's Teaching, and Learning Toolkit suggests 4 months additional progress through social and emotional intervention. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning Children need to feel that they belong and our TISP relational approach has strong evidence to support that relationship and safety are the key to all humans being able to THRIVE and then begin to be social and learn.	4, 5, 6

Total budgeted cost: £ 78,082

St Mary's Buckfast – Pupil Premium Priorities 2025–26

1. Attendance and Engagement

- Reduce persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils (currently 18%) through early intervention, EBSA-informed practice, and sustained home–school partnerships.
- Continue assigning “lead adults” for persistently absent pupils and strengthen attendance analysis through SLT/EWO collaboration.

2. Reading for Pleasure and Attainment

- Embed the *National Year of Reading* agenda across all classes to raise reading fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary for Pupil Premium pupils.
- Launch the new school library, implement the Accelerated Reader programme, and develop home–school reading links to close the attainment gap.

3. Writing: Vocabulary, Stamina and Accuracy

- Improve sentence construction, grammar, spelling, and handwriting consistency through *Pathways for Writing* and *Place Value of Grammar (PVPg)*.
- Narrow the writing gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils by embedding oral rehearsal and high-quality feedback.

4. Mathematical Fluency and Reasoning

- Strengthen number fluency and reasoning for disadvantaged pupils using *Mastering Number*, *Mirodo* and structured talk strategies.
- Increase confidence and attainment for PP pupils through daily fluency practice, oracy in maths, and targeted pre-teaching.

5. Trauma-Informed and Relational Practice

- Deepen staff expertise through continued **TIS UK** and **relational practice** training to support regulation, connection, and readiness to learn.
- Maintain access to the **Butterbrook provision**, **Play Therapist**, and **Speech and Language Therapist** to reduce barriers for disadvantaged and SEND pupils.

6. Assessment and Feedback in Foundation Subjects

- Fully embed the use of *exception sheets* and *POTL* to identify and close gaps for disadvantaged pupils across the wider curriculum.
- Use subject-leader analysis to adapt provision and ensure equitable access to high-quality learning in every subject.

Part B: Review of outcomes in 2024-2025

Attendance

Whole-school attendance was 94.5 % compared with 93.2 % for Pupil Premium pupils. The attendance gap narrowed slightly from the previous year following the introduction of EBSA-informed practice, “lead adults” for persistently absent pupils, and strengthened EWO collaboration. Attendance and family engagement remain key priorities for 2025–26.

Early Years Foundation Stage

61 % of pupils achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD). Half of the Pupil Premium cohort did not reach GLD; all had SEND and EHC plans. Excluding those pupils, disadvantaged outcomes were broadly in line with peers. Targeted SALT, NELI, and TIS support improved communication and emotional readiness to learn — continuing into 2025–26.

Year 1 Phonics

86 % met the expected standard. Two of three Pupil Premium pupils did not reach the threshold (14 % of the cohort); both have SEND. Little Wandle interventions and 1:1 reading support continue into Year 2 retakes.

Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

76 % of all pupils and 60 % of Pupil Premium pupils achieved expected or above in Reading, Writing and Maths. The gap narrowed from the previous year, with reading and maths notably stronger. Writing remains a focus for 2025–26.

Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

61 % of all pupils and 54 % of Pupil Premium pupils achieved the combined expected standard in RWM. About 25 % of disadvantaged pupils also had SEN. When these are excluded, PP attainment is broadly in line with peers. Progress in reading and maths was strong; writing remains a focus for improvement. There were 0 sessions of exclusions for PP children in 2024-2025. Exclusions for PP National Average= 0.13%

Wider impact: 100% of PP children attended trips this year, 100% of children requesting additional support from school counsellor for SEMH needs accessed counselling provision.

- **Butterbrook provision** ensured pupils with complex SEMH and communication needs accessed bespoke curriculum and regulation support.
- Dedicated **Speech and Language Therapist** delivered early assessment and intervention, improving language and classroom participation.
- Access to a qualified **Play Therapist** supported emotional resilience and self-regulation.
- All staff completed **Trauma Informed Schools (TIS)** training and embedded PACE-based relational practice across school.
- Enhanced home–school communication and attendance support led to improved engagement and reduced incidents.

Disadvantaged pupils benefited from an integrated approach linking academic, emotional and social support to secure sustained progress.

Externally provided programmes N/A

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you purchased in the previous academic year. This will help the Department for Education identify which ones are popular in England.

Programme	Provider
Little Wandle	Collins
Power Maths	White Rose
Trauma Informed Schools training	Trauma Informed Schools

Service pupil premium funding (optional) N/A

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information:

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