

Garstang St Thomas Church of England Primary School

Pupil premium strategy statement

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	Main school: 213 Nursery: 39 Total: 252
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	8.92%
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)	2025-2026 2026-2027 2027-2028
Date this statement was published	19 th December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	18 th December 2028
Statement authorised by	Jim Blakely, headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Jim Blakely, headteacher Rachel Procter, pastoral leader
Governor / Trustee lead	Susan Willoughby, designated governor for pupil premium children

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£17,954
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£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>	£17,954

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our intention is that all children achieve well.

At Garstang St Thomas School we recognise that just less than 1/4 of children in our school family do not have the same opportunities as the other children. A group of children in this third are also classified as disadvantaged and others as vulnerable.

We believe that no child should be left behind or be disadvantaged educationally. We are determined that our children are given every chance to realise their full potential through ensuring that they leave us being able to confidently communicate and articulate their thinking, read and understand a variety of texts and be creative thinkers and problem solvers. We focus heavily on communication, vocabulary and reading across the school as we know that these skills are vital to future success in life.

Our intention is that all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, make good progress and achieve 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.

We will consider the challenges faced by vulnerable pupils, including those who have a social worker and young carers. The activity we have outlined in this statement is also intended to support their needs, regardless of whether they are disadvantaged or not.

High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on areas in which pupils who are disadvantaged require the most support. This is proven to have the greatest impact on closing the disadvantage attainment gap and at the same time will benefit the pupils who are not disadvantaged 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 for their disadvantaged peers.

Our approach will be responsive to 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. To ensure they are effective we will:

- ensure disadvantaged pupils are challenged in the learning that they're set
- act early to intervene at the point need is identified
- adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Our attendance data over the past two years indicates that average attendance for children who receive the pupil premium is below our attendance target. In the last academic year, this was slightly below the national average.
2	Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils indicate underdeveloped oral language skills and vocabulary gaps among many disadvantaged pupils. These are evident from Reception through to KS2 and in general, are more prevalent among our disadvantaged pupils than their peers.
3	Our assessments, surveys, observations and discussions with pupils and families have identified social and emotional issues for some of our pupils who receive the pupil premium. These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged pupils, including their attainment.
4	Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils suggest disadvantaged pupils generally have greater difficulties with reading than their peers.

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
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for our disadvantaged pupils to mental health/wellbeing and achievement.	Sustained high attendance by 2027/28 demonstrated by: attendance for disadvantaged pupils at GST is above the national average attendance for a pupils.
To ensure outcomes for pupils in receipt of the pupil premium are at least in line with those of peers in school across the curriculum due to high quality teaching alongside targeted intervention.	Children who receive the pupil premium are achieving well across the curriculum similar to their peers
Improved oral language skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils.	Assessments and observations indicate significantly improved oral language

	among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in lessons, book scrutiny and ongoing formative assessment.
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	<p>Sustained high levels of wellbeing demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations • evidence to show impact of one-to-one and small group wellbeing/ mental health support <p>a significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils</p>
To gain a wealth of learning experiences – formal and informal, in and out of school led by a range of teachers/ experts/professionals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children have experienced a wide range of learning experiences in and out of the classroom. • Disadvantaged children are supported so that they can fully take part in all activities. They are also given additional opportunities for support e.g. additional oracy sessions/ one-off opportunities like sport).

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

Budgeted cost: £ 4,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Purchase of standardised diagnostic assessments.</p> <p>Training for staff to ensure assessments are interpreted and administered correctly.</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>Standardised tests Assessing and Monitoring Pupil Progress Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p>	2,4
<p>A focus on oracy right through school (see school improvement plan).</p> <p>Additional oracy sessions/support for children who receive the pupil premium.</p>	<p>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:</p> <p>Oral language interventions Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p>	2,3,4
<p>Purchase of further CPD and resources to support a DfE validated Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme to secure stronger phonics teaching for all pupils.</p>	<p>Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base that indicates a positive impact on the accuracy of word reading (though not necessarily comprehension), particularly for disadvantaged pupils:</p> <p>Phonics Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF</p>	2,3,4
<p>High quality CPD and release time.</p>	<p>Supporting high quality teaching is pivotal in improving children's outcomes. Research tells us that high quality teaching can narrow the disadvantage gap. The EEF guidance is based on a range of the best available evidence:</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/effective-professional-development</p>	2,3,4

Targeted academic support

Budgeted cost: £6,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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Additional oracy/SALT sessions/ support for children who receive the pupil premium.	Oral language interventions can have a positive impact on pupils' language skills. Approaches that focus on speaking, listening and a combination of the two show positive impacts on attainment: Oral language interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	2,3,4
Additional phonics sessions targeted at disadvantaged pupils who require further phonics support.	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds. Targeted phonics interventions have been shown to be more effective when delivered as regular sessions over a period up to 12 weeks: Phonics Toolkit Strand Education Endowment Foundation EEF	2,4

Wider strategies

Budgeted cost: £ 7,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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<p>Pastoral leader time</p>	<p>Social and emotional learning approaches have a positive impact, on average, of 4 months' additional progress in academic outcomes over the course of an academic year (to be carefully monitored)</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning</p> <p>EEF Guidance about Wider strategies focusing on: well-being and Mental Health. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/schoolimprovement-planning/3-wider-strategies</p>	<p>1,3</p>
<p>CPD for ELSA programme/Confident Me then running programmes for pupils</p>	<p>Social and emotional learning approaches have a positive impact, on average, of 4 months' additional progress in academic outcomes over the course of an academic year (to be carefully monitored)</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning</p> <p>EEF Guidance about Wider strategies focusing on: well-being and Mental Health. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/support-for-schools/schoolimprovement-planning/3-wider-strategies</p>	<p>1,3</p>
<p>Parent Connect – weekly drop in for all parents (with specific encouragement as required)</p>	<p>Parental engagement (where schools involve parents in supporting their child's learning) has been shown to have a positive impact equivalent to an average of four additional months' progress for pupils. This is based on a strong evidence base across multiple studies.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement</p>	<p>1,3</p>
<p>Review and further development of the principles of good practice set out in the DfE's Improving School Attendance advice.</p> <p>This will involve further training and release time for staff to develop and implement revised procedures and support to improve attendance.</p>	<p>The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced levels of absence and persistent absence.</p>	<p>1</p>

General support for children to access activities, educational visits and get to school on time as appropriate.	Based on our experience, we need to support some of our children to be able to access all the opportunities on offer and occasional support to get to school.	All
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: £ 18,000

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

The school has made strong progress towards its intended outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. By the end of Key Stage 2, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is a particular strength. Outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics demonstrate that disadvantaged pupils at our school perform significantly above national averages for disadvantaged pupils and, in several areas, achieve broadly in line with or better than national averages for all pupils. This indicates that the high-quality teaching, targeted support and carefully designed interventions have had a measurable and positive impact. Many pupils who began their schooling with gaps caused by the pandemic have caught up well by Upper Key Stage 2.

Despite these successes, the school recognises that there is still important work to do to secure equity earlier in pupils' education. Attendance remains a key priority, as disadvantaged pupils continue to be over-represented among those who are persistently absent or below the school's attendance target of 97%. While individual cases have improved through targeted support, overall attendance for this group has not yet reached the level required to ensure consistent access to learning. Strengthening early intervention, family engagement, and robust attendance monitoring will remain essential.

In the Early Years and Key Stage 1, ongoing efforts are needed to address oracy and early reading development. Assessments show that disadvantaged pupils often enter school with limited vocabulary and weaker oral language skills compared to their peers. Although improvements have been made through whole-school oracy initiatives and the systematic teaching of early reading, gaps are still evident and continue to affect progress in comprehension and writing in the early years of schooling. Further embedding of high-quality phonics, language-rich environments, and structured talk opportunities remains a priority.

Additionally, the school's wellbeing surveys and pastoral observations highlight continuing needs around social, emotional, and mental health support. Many disadvantaged pupils still require sustained input to develop resilience, regulation, and confidence. While existing wellbeing interventions have had a positive impact—particularly for identified pupils—there is a need for continued investment in preventative and early-help approaches to ensure that emotional needs do not become barriers to learning.

In summary, disadvantaged pupils achieve strongly by the end of Key Stage 2, demonstrating that the school's approach is highly effective in securing long-term academic success. However, further work is needed to ensure that these gains are built on strong foundations from the earliest stages of education, supported by

improved attendance, strengthened oracy and reading provision, and high-quality wellbeing and mental health support.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium to fund in the previous academic year.

Programme	Provider
NA	