

Pupil premium strategy statement – Holy Cross Catholic Primary Academy

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	412
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	76 (18%)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024-2025
Date this statement was published	November 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	November 2026
Statement authorised by	Mrs A Kerrel
Pupil premium lead	Ms S Dodd
Governor / Trustee lead	Mr J Tyson

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£117 042
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>	£117 042

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary Academy, Jesus is the centre of our lives, our learning and our friendships in a safe, happy and caring community where all are welcome. Guided by this mission, our aim for every pupil, regardless of background, is to provide an enriched, stimulating learning environment where each child is nurtured, valued and encouraged to excel in all areas.

We hold high expectations for all our pupils and support them to embrace challenges with courage and resilience. Rooted in our Catholic values, we seek to help each child grow not only academically, but spiritually, socially and emotionally, developing the skills and confidence needed for lifelong learning and formation.

We recognise that high-quality teaching is paramount in securing strong outcomes for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. A core element of our strategy therefore focuses on the professional development of our teaching and support staff, ensuring that they are equipped to deliver inspiring, inclusive, and faith-filled learning experiences that make a lasting difference.

We also understand that some pupils may require more targeted intervention and support. Through careful assessment and close knowledge of every child, we identify individual needs early and use evidence-based interventions to help pupils make meaningful progress. Where more specialised support is required, we work collaboratively with trusted partners to ensure pupils receive the care and guidance they need.

Our strategy also reflects our commitment to offering pupils a rich variety of wider opportunities that broaden horizons and promote personal growth. This may include support with educational visits, sporting events, music tuition, Catholic life experiences, and access to wrap-around care. These experiences help children to grow in confidence, build friendships and develop the God-given talents entrusted to them.

Throughout every aspect of our plan, we place the best interests of the child at the heart of all decisions. We work closely with parents and families, recognising them as the first educators of their children, and seek to build strong, respectful partnerships that reflect the Gospel values of love, hope and compassion.

Key principles of our Pupil Premium strategy:

- For all pupils to make strong, sustained progress in a loving and faith-centred environment.
- To identify pupils' needs early so that support can be timely and effective.

- To provide access to high-quality internal and external services and to review their impact regularly.
- To teach pupils to recognise, understand and regulate their emotions through approaches grounded in compassion, dignity and resilience.
- To support children and families in building positive, nurturing relationships, working together in partnership.
- To create positive, memorable and enriching experiences that develop knowledge, skills and spiritual growth in line with our Catholic mission.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Writing remains the core school improvement priority. Disadvantaged pupils require stronger stamina, structure, vocabulary and confidence to write at length and with accuracy.
2	Limited early language impacts writing fluency, composition and reading comprehension.
3	SEMH remains a significant focus for the school. The SEMH Co-ordinator will now systematically evidence her impact on pupils' wellbeing, behaviour and readiness to learn.
4	Some disadvantaged pupils require additional support to secure the foundations that underpin writing.
5	Disadvantaged attendance remains lower than peers, which affects writing outcomes and access to learning.

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
<p>Pupils develop stronger early communication, vocabulary and oral language skills which support reading comprehension and improved writing outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils demonstrate increased spoken confidence and vocabulary in class discussions. • Improved language assessments across EYFS and KS1. • Vocabulary used more accurately and consistently in writing.
<p>Disadvantaged pupils make accelerated progress in writing, developing stamina, structure and confidence that reduces the attainment gap with their peers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal data shows disadvantaged pupils closing the gap in writing across all year groups. • Books show improved sentence structure, independence, editing skills and writing stamina. • KS1 and KS2 writing outcomes move closer to (or exceed) national benchmarks.
<p>I Pupils develop emotional regulation, resilience and positive relationships so they are ready to learn and able to engage positively in school life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEMH Co-ordinator maintains clear, measurable evidence of impact. • Reduced behavioural incidents for pupils receiving SEMH support. • Pupils demonstrate improved confidence, self-regulation and engagement in lessons. • Positive feedback from families.
<p>Pupils with complex wellbeing needs receive timely, targeted support so that external challenges do not hinder their progress, especially in writing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellbeing interventions show clear, recorded impact. • Pupils receiving support demonstrate improved focus,

	<p>attendance and emotional resilience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased participation in enrichment, Catholic life opportunities and extra-curricular activities.
<p>Disadvantaged pupils' attendance improves, with persistent absence reduced significantly, supporting better engagement and progress—particularly in writing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PP persistent absence falls from 23% to below 15%. • Overall attendance for PP moves closer to whole-school levels. • Improved punctuality, fewer late arrivals. • Pupils demonstrate greater consistency and productivity in writing lessons.
<p>Disadvantaged pupils' attendance improves, with persistent absence reduced significantly, supporting better engagement and progress—particularly in writing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PP persistent absence falls from 23% to below 15%. • Overall attendance for PP moves closer to whole-school levels. • Improved punctuality, fewer late arrivals. • Pupils demonstrate greater consistency and productivity in writing lessons. •

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: £ 7775

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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Embed dialogic teaching and vocabulary development across the curriculum	EEF Oral Language Interventions (+6 months progress)	1,2
Whole-school writing toolkit development, including modelling, shared writing and sentence accuracy work	EEF Writing Interventions (+4 months progress)	2
Continue fidelity to Little Wandle phonics with daily keep-up sessions	EEF Phonics (+5 months progress)	1,2
CPD in Trauma Perceptive Practice (TPP) for all staff	EEF Social and Emotional Learning (+4 months progress)	3,4
Use diagnostic assessment (including Salford Reading Assessments for fluency and comprehension), writing gap analysis, and vocabulary audits to inform adaptive teaching	EEF Feedback (+6 months progress)	1, 2
Develop consistent use of high-quality verbal and written feedback in writing lessons	EEF Feedback (+6 months progress)	2
CPD in dialogic and oracy approaches to strengthen pre-writing talk and idea development	EEF Collaborative Learning (+5 months progress)	1,2

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

Budgeted cost: £73669

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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Small-group and 1:1 tutoring for identified pupils	EEF Small Group Tuition (+4 months progress)	2
Focused phonics sessions and structured TA interventions	EEF Phonics (+5 months progress)	1,2
Structured reading intervention groups using Salford Reading Assessments to track progress in fluency and comprehension	EEF Reading Comprehension Strategies (+6 months progress)	1,2
Targeted SEMH intervention groups to improve readiness to learn and engagement in writing	EEF Social and Emotional Learning (+4 months progress)	3,4
Online adaptive tools to support independent learning	EEF Digital Technology (+4 months progress)	2
1:1 reading/writing boosters for pupils identified through assessment gaps	EEF Individualised Instruction (+4 months progress)	1,2

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

Budgeted cost: £ 36298

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Targeted SEMH support delivered by the SEMH Co-ordinator, including emotional regulation, resilience work and parent partnership	EEF Social and Emotional Learning (+4 months progress)	3,4
SEMH Co-ordinator to maintain structured evidence logs to	DfE Behaviour in Schools Guidance / TPP Framework	3,4

monitor individual and group impact		
Attendance monitoring, first-day response, EWO support and pastoral home engagement for families	DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance	5
EWASS support (Essex Welfare and Attendance Support Service) to provide targeted casework for PA pupils and families	DfE Attendance Guidance: multi-agency approach improves PA outcomes	5
Enrichment and cultural capital funding (trips, retreats, music, sport, Catholic life activities) to inspire writing and widen experiences	EEF Arts Participation (+3 months progress)	1,2,4
Access to wrap-around care to support vulnerable families and improve attendance and punctuality	DfE Attendance Guidance	5
Family support for cost-of-living and hardship to reduce stress and improve readiness for learning	EEF Parental Engagement (+4 months progress)	3,4,5
Wellbeing mentoring and friendship groups	EEF Social and Emotional Learning (+4 months progress)	3

to support positive peer relationships		
Use of regulation spaces/calming areas and Trauma Perceptive Practice across school	TPP Framework / EEF SEL	3,4

Total budgeted cost: £ *[insert sum of 3 amounts stated above]*

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

This has been another positive and encouraging year for our disadvantaged pupils, with strong progress seen across all key stages. Performance has been evaluated using national assessment data, internal tracking systems, phonics screening outcomes, reading assessments, attendance records and wellbeing/SEMH monitoring.

In Early Years, 59% of pupils achieved a Good Level of Development. Although national figures are not yet published, this remains in line with the school's trends and is a sign of solid foundation work. Continuous provision in Year 1 has proved highly effective, supporting both emotional wellbeing and readiness for formal learning in Year 2.

Phonics outcomes continue to be a strength, with the Year 1 Screening Check showing a marked improvement. The fidelity to the Little Wandle Phonics Programme and early intervention have ensured that disadvantaged pupils are making rapid gains in reading confidence and fluency.

In Key Stage 2, outcomes for the overall cohort are strong and on trend:

- Reading at expected standard: **90%** (national 75%)
- Mathematics at expected standard: **83%** (national 74%)
- SPaG (Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling) at greater depth: **30%** (national 27%)
- Writing at expected standard: **77%** (national 72%)

Writing outcomes continue to improve and have been appropriately identified as our focus for this year. The gap in writing between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is narrowing, supported by targeted teaching and interventions.

Attendance and wellbeing continue to improve through the school's caring Catholic ethos, targeted family support, the Essex Welfare and Attendance Support Service (EWASS)/EWO collaboration, and enhanced SEMH provision. Pupil voice and wellbeing monitoring indicate growing confidence, resilience and engagement among disadvantaged pupils.

The external Pupil Premium audit (July 2025) recognised the school's compassionate mission-led ethos, evidence-based approach and strong impact on both learning and wellbeing of pupils. It affirmed that the school is effectively addressing barriers to learning through high-quality teaching, targeted academic support and comprehensive pastoral care.

While recognising that all pupils included in the performance data will have experienced some disruption earlier in their schooling due to COVID-19, our internal data and monitoring show that the majority of disadvantaged pupils are on track to achieve the intended outcomes of our Pupil Premium strategy.

The next step, as identified in the audit and our review, is to capture and share more of the success stories and case studies behind the data, so that the full impact on our disadvantaged children is celebrated and clearly evidenced.

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

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

*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***

The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils

Further information (optional)

Use this space to provide any further information about your pupil premium strategy. For example, about your strategy planning, implementation and evaluation, or other activity that you are delivering to support disadvantaged pupils that is not dependent on pupil premium funding.