

Pupil Premium Strategy Statement – St Alban’s Catholic Voluntary Academy

This statement details our school’s use of pupil premium (and recovery 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	339
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	15%
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)	2023-2026
Date this statement was published	December 2023 (under the old template)
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2026
Statement authorised by	Tim Brogan
Pupil premium lead	Michelle Hodgkinson
Governor / Trustee lead	Stuard Olivier

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£69,170
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year <i>Recovery premium received in academic year 2023/24 cannot be carried forward beyond August 31, 2024.</i>	£ 0
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>	£69,170

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

- At St Alban's Catholic Voluntary Academy, we are committed to our mission that all pupils, irrespective of disadvantage, socio-economic conditions or challenges faced, fulfil their potential and grow as unique, independent and confident individuals in society. We are committed to meeting the pastoral, social and academic needs of each of our children in a loving and spiritual environment. Our expectations are high for all pupils and we are driven to ensure that our disadvantaged learners progress and attainment will be developed and improved alongside their peers.
- Quality first teaching and curriculum design are at the heart of our approach as it is widely understood that this is one of the greatest drivers of pupil attainment, particularly for those from a disadvantaged background. Our cohesive, three-year strategy places a strong emphasis on developing teacher and teaching assistant expertise in the classroom, in order to meet the needs of all pupils. Robust analysis of our school data, alongside scrutiny of latest research-informed and evidence-based good practice, means the emphasis within our strategy has been placed on the development of pupil's vocabulary and language acquisition throughout all key stages. Continual CPD within this area will develop expertise in delivery across our staff, enabling all learners to excel in their learning. To further support our disadvantaged learner's academic development, carefully chosen, targeted small group and one-to-one interventions have been outlined.
- At St Albans, we also place great value on the development of the child as a whole: our approach extends beyond academic achievements to include an important focus on the social, emotional and mental health of our children. Our three-year strategy aims to further invest in providing a supportive and inclusive curriculum and school environment that will equip our pupils with the necessary skills needed to thrive in an ever-changing world.
- To ensure that the actions outlined in our strategy yield the best possible outcomes for our children, robust monitoring and review of our strategy aims will take place on a regular basis.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge Internal
1	<u>Communication and language acquisition</u> Poor communication and language has a knock on effect for all other areas of the curriculum: if children cannot communicate effectively, they cannot interact and build the relationships required to become independent learners as they progress through the school. In the Ofsted English Curriculum Research Review (July 2022) it states that, "developing spoken language is especially important for those from

	disadvantaged backgrounds, who are most likely to be word-poor.” Reception baseline assessments frequently highlight that our children from disadvantaged backgrounds are entering school with delayed communication and language skills. As they progress through school, these delayed communication and language skills impact pupil’s abilities to reason, problem solve and communicate in maths; to acquire reading comprehension fluency and to articulate themselves in writing tasks, along with providing barriers to social interaction and personal expression.
2	<p><u>Exposure to rich and ambitious vocabulary</u></p> <p>This is further supported by ‘Why closing the word gap matters: Oxford language report’ where evidence between poor vocabulary acquisition and disadvantaged backgrounds is clear (see appendix A). Internal data in EYFS, KS1 SATS and phonics screening checks confirms that there is a significant progress gap between our disadvantaged children in Early years and KS1 and their non-disadvantaged peers in reading and phonics (see appendix B). This further extends to KS2 where, in year 3, the gap continues to stay wide.</p>
3	<p><u>Writing</u></p> <p>Fluency in writing underpins the primary curriculum. At KS1, both attainment and progress for our disadvantaged has fallen significantly below school non-disadvantaged and national non-disadvantaged (see appendix B). Internal data in KS2 shows a gap for all year groups between attainment for disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged learners. Although the progress gap decreases throughout this phase, regular intervention and enhanced support are needed to achieve this.</p>
Challenge number	Detail of challenge - external barriers
4	<p><u>Social, emotional, and mental health challenges</u></p> <p>Evidence suggests that children from disadvantaged backgrounds have, on average, weaker SEL skills at all ages than their more affluent peers. These skills are likely to influence a range of outcomes for pupils: lower SEL skills are linked with poorer mental health and lower academic attainment. As well as this, there is some evidence to suggest that disadvantaged pupils are less likely to use metacognitive and self-regulatory strategies to support their own learning and overcoming challenges (IIS, closing the disadvantage gap: evidence from EEF toolkit). Internal observations, pupil/staff conversations and data show this as a barrier to further attainment for our disadvantaged cohort across all phases.</p>
5	<p><u>Opportunities for socio-cultural capital</u></p> <p>Socio-cultural capital refers to our background knowledge and how this influences our perceptions and understanding of the world around us. Commitment to developing knowledge, skills, values and experiences for our pupils is essential in addressing the barriers to our children’s development of character and in seeking out their passions and aspirations in the world.</p>

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	Challenge
For children to be articulate in their communication skills when in conversation with both peers and adults. To be proficient at communicating in maths, reading and writing in order to achieve their academic potential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Success for our disadvantaged cohort to be measured against progress in the Communication and Language Curriculum. - Academic progress will be seen in reading, writing and maths across the key stage. 	1
For children to have experience, understanding and acquisition of a broad and ambitious vocabulary in order to communicate orally and in writing, across a range of social contexts and academic subjects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For the progress gap between our disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged cohorts to have progressively closed in both reading and phonics in KS1 so that our disadvantaged learners' progress is in line with non-disadvantaged. - For both attainment and progress for our disadvantaged learners in reading to remain in line or exceeding, both in school and nationally at KS2. - For writing results to be impacted by vocabulary knowledge and use in KS2 so that the gap closes between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged cohorts in end of key stage tests. - Focussed learning walks and book looks will evidence the high focus on and priority of vocabulary acquisition across the curriculum and in particular in Reading for Meaning sessions and English lessons. 	2
For the progress gap between our disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged cohorts to close in writing so that our disadvantaged children achieve in line with both school and national non-disadvantaged cohorts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For Rainbow Grammar to have impacted children's writing so that technical accuracy of sentence structure is a strength of our disadvantaged cohort's writing. - For staff understanding and subject knowledge of writing to be of a consistently high level across school, resulting in high quality teaching and feedback having a direct impact on the progress of our disadvantaged cohort's writing across all phases. 	3

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal assessments in years 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 will demonstrate maintained or accelerated progress for our disadvantaged cohort. 	
For our disadvantaged children to have raised aspirations, demonstrating positive self-esteem and motivation which will support their mental health and wellbeing. For all children to have strategies in place to support and develop their self-regulation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal data (Priority pupil team minutes, PP phase reviews, Edukey tracking of 5 step plans) will show that emotional health concerns have been identified at the earliest opportunity and strategies/interventions have been put in place to support. - Focussed learning walks will show that emotional health and wellbeing is part of classroom culture across school. 	4
For our co-curriculum to reflect a broad and diverse range of opportunities, and barriers to participation be removed or reduced, so that our children from disadvantaged backgrounds can both explore new interests and develop existing ones to achieve their full potential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Both internal and external curriculum reviews will demonstrate clear and explicit teaching of character behaviour mapped out progressively across subjects and phases within school. Pupil voice from within both our disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged cohorts will demonstrate that barriers to participation have been broken down and there is no significant difference between the uptake of co-curricular opportunities between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged cohorts. 	

Activity in this academic year – 2024/5

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: £24,200

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p><i>To improve communication skills across all phases, including foundation stage and early years</i></p> <p>Speak Out Oracy Project involvement 2 x lead teachers working with artist in school.</p> <p>CPD on oral language and oracy intervention given to English lead and 2 x oracy project lead teachers.</p> <p><i>Further CPD in oral language interventions for all EYFS and KS1 staff, ensuring consistency in communication development.</i></p> <p><i>Increased use of targeted language support for children identified with speech and language delays, particularly those in Reception and Year 1.</i></p>	<p>Children who come from disadvantaged backgrounds and who are English language learners (ELL) are at high risk of limited oral language skills which impacts on later educational achievement and socio-emotional functioning (University of Bristol research report 2023)</p> <p>On average, oral language intervention approaches have a high impact on pupil outcomes of around 6 months additional progress (EEF 2021)</p>	1
<p><i>To develop broad and ambitious vocabulary use</i></p> <p><i>Continued Sounds-Write training and resourcing, with a specific focus on addressing phonics gaps in Year 1 and providing intervention for KS2 children still struggling with phonics.</i></p> <p><i>Whole-school vocabulary CPD programme, targeting strategies to embed ambitious vocabulary across all curriculum areas.</i></p> <p>Foundation subjects' curriculum design to highlight key vocabulary to be taught in each topic <i>Development of a tiered vocabulary approach in subject-specific contexts, ensuring disadvantaged pupils are exposed to high-level academic language</i></p>	<p>Phonics has a positive impact overall (+5 months) with very extensive evidence and is an important component in the development of early reading skills, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds (EEF toolkit 2024)</p> <p>Regular exposure to high quality, ambitious vocabulary is an impacting factor in progress in reading comprehension and writing for the disadvantaged cohort in our school. Language and literacy have a central role in school success (Clark, 2019, p. 6) and difficulties with the language can present a significant barrier to academic achievement.</p> <p>The complexities of language children are exposed to in KS3 is significantly higher</p>	2

	than KS2. To bridge this transition gap there is a need for a coherent approach to vocabulary embedded through curriculum, pedagogy and transition activities at KS2. (Derby Research school, Bridging the gap at KS2-3 transition, 2024)	
<p>Development of writing</p> <p>Rainbow Grammar implementation</p> <p><i>Expansion of Rainbow Grammar training to include teaching assistants, ensuring consistency in intervention strategies for writing.</i></p> <p>Whole staff regular CPD and coaching programme for key phase.</p> <p><i>Additional KS1 staff coaching to improve writing instruction, addressing the significant attainment gap identified in KS1 results.</i></p> <p>Development of internal writing moderation – staff CPD. <i>Key staff from each phase to attend city-wide moderation agreement trialing.</i></p>	Internal assessment of writing and of our writing curriculum across the school shows a gap in children's understanding of sentence structures and Grammar for writing support. Rainbow Grammar is based upon Rosenshine's principles of instruction.	3
<p>SEMH support</p> <p><i>Continued embedding of the Zones of Regulation framework, ensuring self-regulation strategies are consistently applied across school.</i></p> <p>Ongoing training for school senior mental health lead – mental health school's award</p> <p><i>Strengthened use of the 5-step mental health plan, with more rigorous tracking and tailored interventions for identified pupils.</i></p> <p><i>Staff CPD on trauma-informed practice to enhance understanding of emotional barriers to learning and implement effective support strategies.</i></p>	Interventions which target social and emotional learning (SEL) seek to improve pupils' interaction with others and self-management of emotions. The EEF have reported that, on average, SEL interventions have an identifiable and valuable impact on attitudes to learning and social relationships in school. They also have an average overall impact of four months' additional progress on attainment. Improvements are greater when SEL approaches are embedded into routine educational practices and supported by professional development and training for staff.	4

<p>Opportunities for socio-cultural capital</p> <p><i>Further development of the cultural capital curriculum, mapping out key experiences and enrichment activities throughout the school year.</i></p> <p>Music teaching provision across school from music partnership</p>	<p>The Cultural Learning Alliance's 2017 research project used large sample sizes of 12,000 to find the following key research findings:</p> <p>Participation in structured arts activities can increase cognitive abilities by 17%</p> <p>Learning through arts and culture can improve attainment in Maths & English</p> <p>Learning through arts and culture develops skills and behaviour that lead children to do better in school.</p> <p>Students from low-income families who take part in arts activities at school are three times more likely to get a degree.</p>	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £ 9670

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Broad and ambitious vocabulary use</p> <p>Targeted intervention in reading to support KS1 and KS2 children in making additional progress:</p> <p>KS1 – Sounds write intervention.</p> <p>KS2 – Herts for learning reading intervention.</p>	<p>Phonics has a positive impact overall (+5 months) with very extensive evidence and is an important component in the development of early reading skills, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds (EEF toolkit 2024)</p> <p>HFL Reading Fluency Project has been proven to support the reading development of low achieving pupils. On average, in 8 weeks, pupils taking part in the project made 2 years and 3 months progress in reading comprehension age and have gained an increase in accuracy of 13 months as measured by the YARC assessment tool.</p>	1
<p>Competent and confident writers across school</p> <p>High quality CPD in leading writing interventions linked to Rainbow Grammar will be delivered by the English and PP lead, in order to ensure knowledge and skills to deliver high quality intervention are present.</p> <p><i>Development of targeted writing interventions in KS1 and LKS2 to</i></p>	<p>The simple view of writing (EEF guidance report 2021) states that Ronald Kellogg, an American literacy expert, argues writing can be as cognitively demanding as chess. It is demanding because children need to coordinate several different processes. The EEF also states that In England, positive effects have been found in studies where teaching assistants deliver high-quality structured interventions which deliver short sessions, over a finite period, and link learning to classroom teaching,</p>	3

support sentence construction and composition (based on Rainbow Grammar), particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Training for Tas linked to this.		
<p>Mental health and wellbeing to feel supported in order to allow them emotional freedom to learn.</p> <p>Priority pupil meetings held weekly to identify children in need of emotional or mental health support.</p> <p><i>Staff CPD, training and delivery of ELSA intervention across school delivered at earliest help level.</i> High quality specialist training for ELSA delivery.</p> <p>Mental health check ins / friends resilience interventions delivered at earliest help level. Mental health first-aider training provided to support delivery of sessions.</p> <p><i>Bridge the Gap external support to be further utilised, ensuring targeted mental health interventions are in place for the most vulnerable pupils.</i></p>	<p>Interventions which target social and emotional learning (SEL) seek to improve pupils' interaction with others and self-management of emotions. The EEF have reported that, on average, SEL interventions have an identifiable and valuable impact on attitudes to learning and social relationships in school. They also have an average overall impact of four months' additional progress on attainment. Improvements are greater when SEL approaches are embedded into routine educational practices and supported by professional development and training for staff.</p>	4

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

Budgeted cost: £5000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
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<p>Broad and ambitious vocabulary use</p> <p>Accelerated Reader Programme</p> <p>Development of library space</p> <p>Further development of reading book offer across Early years / KS1 / KS2</p> <p><i>Development of reading spine across school</i></p> <p>Employment of librarian to coordinate library space</p>	<p>Educational research suggests a strong relationship between vocabulary and comprehension, where a broad vocabulary (knowing lots of words) and a deep vocabulary (knowing those words well) correlates with better understanding. In an EEF study, pupils eligible for free school meals made on average 5 months' additional progress in reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition intervention.</p> <p>Young people who enjoy reading very much are three times as likely to read above the level expected for their age as young people who do not enjoy reading at all (<i>Children's and Young People's Reading in 2015, National Literacy Trust</i>).</p> <p>Development of library resources will aim to engage disadvantaged children to read for pleasure. Children who read for pleasure also have enhanced levels of text comprehension, an increased knowledge of grammar and show improvement in their writing.</p>	<p>1,2,3,5</p>
<p>Co-curriculum to reflect a broad and diverse range of opportunities, so that children can achieve their full potential</p> <p><i>Further development of the cultural capital curriculum, mapping out key experiences and enrichment activities throughout the school year (E.g. authors / cultural and religious experiences / arts practitioners)</i></p> <p>In school club provision / offers developed to reflect wide variety of interests and support oracy and vocabulary building. <i>Careful mapping and monitoring of this provision by a key member of staff to focus on encouraging participation of disadvantaged cohort.</i></p> <p><i>Increased funding allocation for educational visits, ensuring all disadvantaged pupils can access extracurricular and cultural opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>Strengthening pupil voice and leadership opportunities, ensuring disadvantaged pupils have greater representation in school-wide initiatives.</i></p>	<p>Research shows that offering arts and cultural opportunities are perceived to have wider life-enhancing benefits. The EEF reports that Arts participation approaches can have a positive impact on academic outcomes in other areas of the curriculum.</p> <p>Knowledge is not neutral, as Ogbu (1990, Ogbu1992) elucidates; students whose cultural capital, funds of learning and social intelligence lay outside that endorsed by the education system become inherently disadvantaged.</p> <p>Lau (2016) explains that social intelligence is a crucial influence on how young adults learn in modern times. If we can support our students to build this, then we will help them to access our curriculum and thrive.</p>	<p>All</p>

Total budgeted cost: £ 69,100

