Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2026 to 2027 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 overview

Detail	Data
School name	St. Stephens C of E First School.
Number of pupils in school	165 (est.)
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	24% (est.)
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	02/09/2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	10/07/2027
Statement authorised by	Sarah Callanan
Pupil premium lead	Sarah Barrett
Governor / Trustee lead	Fursheen Sajawal

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£50,015. (est.)
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year.	£50,015. (est.)

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Trust –wide intent- *we are ambitious for all our pupils, with a commitment to look under the surface at how disadvantage and low income affects learning, to use data to ensure targeted academic support is in place and ensure wider social PD support is in place and that everything is tracked rigorously. We aren't label led but know our pp pupils and cross over with SEND needs. We are focused on high quality teaching and consistency for pupils*

Statement of intent St Stephen's C of E First School

At St Stephen's C of E First School, our Christian vision underpins every aspect of school life. We believe that every child is uniquely created and loved by God and that every child matters. Guided by our values of love, compassion, forgiveness, integrity, respect and community, we are committed to ensuring that all children flourish academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually.

Serving a diverse community in Redditch, we understand that children arrive at St Stephen's with different experiences, strengths and challenges. Some of our families face significant financial pressures and wider barriers beyond their control. As a school, we are called to serve others through practical action. Our free breakfast club, school food bank and pastoral support reflect our commitment to ensuring that every child feels valued, cared for and ready to learn.

At St Stephen's, we believe that the greatest difference we can make to children's life chances is through excellent teaching every day. We have therefore designed a curriculum that is ambitious, knowledge-rich and carefully sequenced, giving all pupils the opportunity to succeed regardless of their starting points. Reading is at the heart of our curriculum. Through Read Write Inc. phonics, we are determined that every child becomes a confident reader. Writing is developed through the CUSP Unity Writing curriculum and our Strong Start approach, which establishes high expectations from the beginning of each academic year. In mathematics, Maths – No Problem! and daily rapid recall activities help pupils develop fluency, reasoning and confidence when working with number.

We know that disadvantage does not look the same for every child. For this reason, our support is carefully tailored to individual needs. Through responsive teaching, high-quality formative assessment and a culture where mistakes are viewed as an important part of learning, we ensure that barriers are identified and addressed quickly. We focus on what we can influence most: high-quality teaching, excellent attendance, strong relationships and high aspirations for every pupil.

As a Church school, we are committed to ensuring that children experience life in all its fullness. Learning extends far beyond the classroom through a wide range of opportunities that broaden horizons and create lasting memories. Every child takes part in educational

visits, sporting events and enrichment activities. We provide free after-school clubs, residential opportunities and experiences that celebrate the rich diversity of our community. We are proud to be a multilingual school where pupils speak between fifteen and twenty different languages, and we actively celebrate the cultures, faiths and experiences that make our community unique, including working with local organisations to celebrate Eid and other significant events.

Partnership is central to our success. Staff, governors, families, the church and the wider community work together to ensure that all children receive the support and opportunities they need. We strive to create a school where children feel safe, known and valued; where they are encouraged to be curious learners, caring friends and responsible citizens.

At St Stephen's, our vision is simple: because every child matters, every child can succeed. Through our Christian values, high expectations and unwavering commitment to inclusion, we seek to ensure that every child leaves our school with the knowledge, confidence, faith and character needed to flourish in the next stage of their education and in later life.

Our Approach.

1.Be experts on the pupils in front of you.

2.Ensure seating plans are thoughtful and supports equity, talk and learning partners.

3. Pupils at risk of greatest underachievement is where resource needs to be directed.

4. Think carefully about the background knowledge required to access the work which will need addressing/frontloading.

5. Ensure additional adults support those who most need it.

6. Ensure that pupils receive clear feedback.

7. Every interaction matters. Every single one.

At St Stephen's C of E First School, we use 'Thrive' as a tool for profiling so we can disrupt emerging patterns which cause concern for our disadvantaged and vulnerable children. We have a full time Thrive practitioner who works with all our Thrive children each week.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge

1. Reading and Oracy	There is a strong reading focus in the school, and the school has seen excellent progress in this area in phonics and in reading fluency in KS 2. Latest research shows that strong oral language (oracy) is the foundational precursor to reading success. Children who are supported in their earliest years are more likely to succeed in school. This year in school we are going to address this supporting our youngest pupils to develop good language and communication skills. As a school with many bi-lingual pupils this will play a fundamental role in the Early years and foundations classrooms.
2. Math's, rapid re-call.	Data and monitoring reveal that our disadvantaged children do well in math. We use Math's no Problem as the scheme to guide our teaching of math. However, there is a gap emerging in their knowledge of basic mathematical concepts and rapid re-call of facts, such as number bonds and times tables. We plan to address this gap this year by adding in an additional twenty minutes of math's each day to improve mental recall. It is hoped that this will have an impact on their overall mathematical understanding.
3. Writing across all subjects.	For our disadvantaged pupils to succeed in their futures, they must be able to write accurately in a range of styles and across a range of subjects. The nature of our 'Cusp' curriculum ensures that explicit vocabulary will be taught across all subjects to improve understanding and enhance writing in these areas. Children will continue to receive daily English lessons where they will be taught new aspects of English grammar, sentence structure and develop skills in planning writing. It is imperative that standards in writing are seen through the foundation subjects in the curriculum.
3. Inclusion	Assessments of children who are disadvantaged and vulnerable and have SEND show that for them to make progress there needs to be daily, effective, high-quality teaching. Pupils needs **must** be individually met. This year we plan to achieve this through a focus on the CRST pre-requisites for adaptive teaching. The key areas of focus for us will be: - Using highly effective in the moment, formative assessment. - Establishing a culture of learning where pupils reveal errors and misunderstanding. - Ensuring that all teachers have a repertoire of responsive strategies that they can use on the classroom.
4. Enrichment	Our children who come from disadvantaged backgrounds see very little of the world that is beyond their homes and their towns. We place high value on creating wider educational outcomes, often beyond the

	classroom walls. We endeavor this year to increase the options available for our pupils. Assessments, thrive data and discussions with pupils and families identifies that social and emotional issues for many pupils can be supported through a wide range of enrichment opportunities. These social and emotional needs and challenges can particularly affect disadvantaged pupils.
5. Attendance	The school struggled with attendance and data shows that our disadvantaged children were 2.7% lower than whole school percentages, which were also still low at 93.5%. Persistent absence across school was 20%, with the pupil premium children at 33.3%. There is a strong desire to close this gap for all our pupils, including our most vulnerable, there will be a significant effort to reduce any persistently absent children.
It should be noted that we aim to improve behaviour as part of our Pupil Premium Strategy, but we view these as outcomes and symptoms of the challenges listed above and not the root causes.	

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 oral language skills and vocabulary among our youngest disadvantaged pupils. • Teachers to use oral questioning and insist on children answering orally in full sentences. • Pupils' oracy skills to be further enhanced through the introduction of new oracy materials E.g. National Literacy Trust. • New oracy lead to be appointed from September 2027, to support pupils.	• Assessments and observations to indicate significantly improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils. • This is then evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in lessons, book scrutiny and ongoing formative assessment. • Listening and talking to the children to prove that oracy has a high focus, particularly in the early years.
• Teachers including teachers in the early years to receive on going CPD on writing. • There will be a focus on writing styles and writing functionality across all subjects not just English.	• EYFS writing outcomes should show repeated success from 2026/27 by the number of written words. • Handwriting should improve for all pupils.

• There will be a greater focus on handwriting particularly joining writing in years 3 and 4. • Writing lead to continue to monitor the teaching of writing as well as whole school book looks to ensure progress.	• Writing attainment should be 90% above by the end of the academic year 2027. • Writing in the foundation subjects will be of a higher quality.
• Consistency in practice across school to ensure that the essential pre-requisites of adaptive teaching are being rigorously delivered. Eith a whole school focus on the three key areas outlined above.	• Assessments and observations should indicate significantly improved attainment and progress among disadvantaged pupils. • This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in lessons, book scrutiny and ongoing formative assessment.
• A high-quality enrichment curriculum is needed to achieve and sustain improved social and emotional needs for all pupils in our school but especially for our disadvantaged pupils. • Free breakfast club and after school clubs for all pupils especially those from disadvantaged and vulnerable backgrounds. • Desire for all pupils to have memorable and enhancing educational experience.	• There need to be sustained high levels of emotional stability from 2026/27 demonstrated by: • Qualitative data from pupil voice, parent surveys and teacher observations. • A significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils. • A significant increase in the use of the Thrive and tripe for our Thrive children particularly as a tool to support children's emotional needs.
• Attendance must rise in line with or as near to national expectations as possible for our disadvantaged learners. • For persistence absence to be in line or below National averages for our disadvantaged pupils. • Attendance to be continued to be monitored by -weekly by attendance lead and finance lead. • Breakfast club signposted to encourage early attendance into school.	• Aims to have high levels of attendance between 95% and above 26/27.

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: £18,392.16

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Appoint an oracy lead for September 2026. This person will receive training to understand how to best support the development of oracy standards in school.	Every child regardless of their background should be empowered to find, develop and express their authentic voice. Oracy report: Creating confident communicators | National Literacy Trust Reading and language are deeply interconnected, and one cannot develop without the other. What is the Reading is Language Model? | OxEd & Assessment	1
CPD from maths lead for all teachers and AA's to support the teaching of rapid re-call and basic mental maths. To be further monitored and evaluated through the school year.	Mastering rapid recall in maths mastery relies on conceptual understanding rather than rote memorization. Effective rapid re-call strategies align with the 'Maths-No Problem! Mastery approach. Improving learning in the primary classroom with retrieval practice 4 tips on how to teach primary multiplication facts recall Evidence suggests that talking their writing out loud help them to become more independent writers. Evidence also suggests that good handwriting can help children to write more fluently and produce longer pieces of writing. Children need to be up skilled in planning for writing so that they are not then cognitively overloaded when writing independently. The writing framework	1 2

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

Budgeted cost: £29.623 (est)

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Ensure consistent adaptations are made across all year groups. SENDCO to embed the three key areas from the CRSY Essential Pre-Requistes of Adaptive Teaching. Sustained CPD on developing learning behaviours in school to manage and improve children 's attitudes to learning.	Research evidence suggest that high quality inclusive learning environments have a positive effect on pupils achievements and behaviour. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/send Evidence show that improving learning behaviours, building relationship with children as well as having consistent classroom routines; all go to create predictable classrooms that support belonging and learning. Running the Room: Tom Bennett SEND Huh Curriculum conversations with SEND Leaders. Mary Myatt and John Tomsett Research shows that carefully selected high quality teaching with carefully selected small group and 1:1 intervention can have a positive impact on pupils' attainment. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/teaching-assistants Adaptive teaching is about uncovering learning, not just covering content. We don't know what we don't know, until pupils show us. Through checking for understanding and using feedback well, teachers can adapt in the moment to maximise learning. Adaptive teaching in practice: using feedback to check… | EEF	3

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

Budgeted cost:

Thrive practitioner: £20,392.16

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
To ensure that the school continues	We know that enrichment opportunities can help expand horizons, raise aspirations and improve engagement, and we want to ensure that these opportunities are available for all, not just the privileged few. The development of essential skills, including teamwork, problem solving and communication, can	4 5

to offer a rich and varied curriculum. This will include free clubs for all children as well as access to breakfast club and multiple school trips and a residential. The school p[promises that no child will miss out. Classroom can also offer enrichment as well as offering a wider curriculum out of class. The Thrive and mental health lead will continue to support the needs of our pupils especially those from disadvantaged	increase sense of belonging and contribute to greater wellbeing and improvements in attainment. Background supporting the enrichment framework for schools and colleges - GOV.UK Evidence shows that for child to have high levels of success in school. School should have access to a SEMH tool that will help to meet the needs of all learners especially the disadvantaged and vulnerable. https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/eef-guidance-reports/primary-sel/EEF_Social_and_Emotional_Learning.pdf Thrive offers a proven approach to behaviour and wellbeing, grounded in child development, neuroscience and attachment theory. About us | The Thrive Approach	

back-grounds.		
For all class-room to build an engaging learning environ-ment, so that all children want to attend school every day. Attend-ance lead to track and close the gap between school and PP attend-ance and promote how es-sential at-tending school is especially for those children who are disadvan-taged and vulnera-ble.	Missing school has a clear impact on attainment, affecting progress, confidence and readiness to learn. Children who miss 2 to 4 weeks of school in year 11 have half the odds of achieving a grade 5 in English and maths compared to simi-lar pupils who attend regularly. Being in school every day helps children stay connected to learning, peers and the wider life of the school. It promotes a sense of belonging, a stable routine and access to opportu-nities that support personal, social and academic develop-ment. When attendance declines, children are more likely to experience reduced progress, increased vulnerability and poorer long-term outcomes, including an increased risk of becoming NEET (that is, not in education, employment or training). Attendance: why it matters, key data and guidance - GOV.UK Children with a social worker face additional challenges. Pu-pils on a child protection plan miss, on average, almost 8 weeks of school a year, which is far higher than for the wider pupil population. This highlights the importance of strong collaboration between families, schools and local authority partners to identify barriers early and provide the right sup-port. Attendance: why it matters, key data and guidance - GOV.UK	5

Total budgeted cost: £50,033.392

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2025 to 2026 academic year.

Teaching

Y	Good progress		Average progress		Minimal progress

There is good evidence to suggest that the children in the Early years are on track to having strong language skills. …. reached GLD with ….of them achieving in communication and language. The Early years team have gone to great lengths to improve language skills. They have created a language rich environment across the classroom and it id clear that language and vocabulary have been high on the agenda. This will continue to be a focus for the next academic year but will be more closely linked with reading as there is to be a new oracy lead who will be working closely with the Reading and Early years lead.

Across school, teachers are careful about holding meaningful conversations with their children. With a focus on cognitive overload the teachers have been keeping the language at a minimum but using language which is crucial to the children's understanding of new concepts. The language use in maths is excellent; this is because the maths curriculum builds upon mathematical language as the children progress through school. Mathematical language is a key component in Maths No Problem!.

In the foundation subject's teacher have used CUSP vocabulary to enhance understanding of key topic in history, geography and art. This has been evident in their writing within these subjects. Writing will continue to be a focus next year as there this is only the second year of the new writing strategy. Further training on writing will ensue in September 2026. The new Year 3 cohort had a lot of support to help them to achieve ARE in reading, so writing accurately, with correct grammar and using full and clear sentences, will be a strong focus for this cohort next year.

Targeted Academic Support

	Good progress	Y	Average progress		Minimal progress

In recent reports, SIP and Head teachers reports there is evidence of pupils benefitting from clear sequences of learning where strong inclusion strategies have been used. Adaptions have been clear in learning walks, and this is becoming evident in most classes across school. Where is works well teachers are catching children's misconceptions and are dressing these in the moment, by clarifying explanations and taking time to re explain. In a SIP report in March, it was commented that, 'Pupils spoke articulately about how they were being supported, for example using notes on whiteboards.' Inclusion and adaptive teaching will remain high on the agenda for next year, as this is an area that can always be improved and embedded for our pupils. The Central Region School Trust have selected seven Essential Pre-requisites for Adaptive Teaching. Within the leader ship team we have highlighted three areas that we are going to be

working on in the next academic year to support the needs of our most vulnerable learners. These have been listed earlier in this report.

Wider outcomes

Y	Good progress		Average progress		Minimal progress

Enrichment tracker data shows that except for the Nursery class. The children in EYFS and above engaged between 98% and 100% in year 3 and 4 in enrichment activities across the school year. The school thrives to ensure that children benefit form experiences inside and outside the classroom which will benefit their development and journey throughout school. Research suggests that when enrichment is high attendance and well being for pupils can be high also.

The children's wellbeing has been excellent in a recent pupil survey only one child expressed concerns about school. This is a great result and shows that our Thrive approach to supporting our pupils is working well. The children are happy to be in school, they feel safe, they love their trips and the activities, and they perform well as a result.

Attendance this year remained below average for most of the Year with us in the last week being at 93.39% which was lower than National at 94.88%. There are robust monitoring systems in place for attendance, but this will continue to be a high focus for school next year. The ami is to use incentives and weekly reminders to parent as to how they can ensure that our attendance stays above National next year. First day calling will continue and welfare checks will be carried out every three days where pupils are at risk of PA.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
N/A	

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

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?	

Further information (optional)