



Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium and recovery premium funding for the 2024 to 2025 academic year 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 Matthias Academy
Number of pupils in school (Sept 2024)	52
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	79%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2024/2025 to 2027/2028
Date this statement was published	September 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2025
Statement authorised by	Aileen Morrison Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Simon Quinn
Governor / Trustee lead	Jonathan Hoare

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£21,600
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	£21,600

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Pupil Premium targets additional money at pupils who meet the eligibility criteria, to help them achieve their full potential.

In 2012, Eligibility for the Pupil Premium was extended to pupils who had been eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at any point on the last 6 years. As a group, children who have been eligible for FSM at any point in time, have consistently lower educational attainment than those who have never been eligible for FSM.

Schools have the freedom to spend the Premium, which is additional to the underlying school budget, in a way they think will best diminish difference in attainment between the most vulnerable pupils and the whole school.

Pupil Premium is also provided for children in care who have been looked after for more than six months and care leavers, recognising that they need additional support to help them raise their educational achievement. It is also provided for children with parents in the armed services.

For each academic year - Pupil Premium allocation is based on student data in the January school census from the preceding academic year.

1 Barriers to learning

We are aware that pupils attending St Matthias Academy, as in many schools, may experience a wide range of barriers to learning. Many of our students have additional needs around speech and language and social interaction or diagnosed medical conditions and the PP spend reflects this. Other factors that can impact learning include experience of family bereavement, living outside the family home or witnessing DV, emotional abuse or drug and alcohol misuse. There are also the risks of CSE and CCE that need to be considered when choosing the appropriate internal and agency interventions. Many students will be assessed for an EHCP and in many cases, St Matthias will pay for the associated costs for the process

For some of the Pupil Premium Cohort, St Matthias Academy is the additional intervention bought in by another school and funded from their own Pupil Premium funding.

At St Matthias Academy, we aim to support all pupils. We do this by providing good quality classroom teaching with additional support staff. This is supplemented by other interventions.

- Ongoing support for Year 11 leavers in their transition to higher education
- Time to allow intervention strategies with focus groups on attendance and transition

- Free Breakfast Club to start the day in a positive way and help students achieve more in class
- Snacks at break to help student's energy and concentration levels
- Reading interventions
- Speech and language support
- Providing bespoke programmes for students requiring alternative learning provision in addition to their core academic subjects in order to meet their needs
- Attendance – Individualised attendance support

Our strategy will be driven by the needs and strengths of each young person, based on formal and informal assessments, not assumptions or labels. This will help us to ensure that we offer them the relevant skills and experience they require to be prepared for adulthood.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Our assessments show that disadvantaged pupils have generally made little progress from KS2 until their referral/ admission at St Matthias Academy. Whilst the types of barriers to learning and the difficulties disadvantaged pupils experience vary, their overall academic progress tends to be lower in most subjects compared to non-disadvantaged pupils. This trend is most recognisable in reading.
2	Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils show that disadvantaged pupils are generally more likely to have speech, language and communication difficulties compared to non-disadvantaged pupils in our school.
3	Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils show that disadvantaged pupils generally have greater challenges around communicating and expressing their emotions and have particular challenges in social interactions. Communication often takes the form of poor behaviour.
4	Through observations and conversations with pupils and their families, we find that disadvantaged pupils generally have fewer opportunities to develop cultural capital outside of school.
5	Our assessments, observations and conversations with pupils indicate that disadvantaged pupils often require additional support to develop personal skills, e.g., independent travel.

6	Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families demonstrate that the education, wellbeing and wider aspects of development of many of our disadvantaged pupils have been impacted by the pandemic to a greater extent than for other pupils. These findings are backed up by several national studies.
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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
Improved attainment for disadvantaged pupils in all subjects, notably reading, relative to their starting points as identified through baseline assessments.	Through achievement of improved performance, as demonstrated by our end of year assessments at the end of our strategy in 2024/25. An improvement in the attainment (compared to baseline assessment) of disadvantaged pupils entered for GCSE subjects, particularly but not exclusively English . For those that are entered for GCSEs, results show disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as others in their cohort. [low numbers of pupils mean the trends over 3 years may be skewed by individual results]
Improved language comprehension for disadvantaged pupils so that they can independently comprehend subject-specific texts with challenging terminology.	Assessment of pupils' reading comprehension shows a reduction in the disparity in outcomes between disadvantaged pupils and their peers in 2024/25.
Pupils can use a range of communication systems including Zones of Regulation to aid their understanding and to develop emotional literacy and inter-personal communication skills.	Through achievement of EHC plan termly outcomes and evidenced in Boxall Reports & Class Charts (behaviour) records.
Disadvantaged pupils have greater confidence and independence to help them engage more with the wider community and prepare for adulthood.	Through observations and discussions with pupils and their families. We aim to have no NEETs.
Disadvantaged pupils feel better prepared for career progression and / or HE opportunities through mentoring, work experience and opportunity.	All disadvantaged pupils are able to access high quality careers mentoring.

	By the end of 2024/25, disadvantaged pupils are progressing to higher or further education at the end of KS4 in the same numbers as their peers.
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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.

Total budget: £21,600

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £ 6,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Focus on Reading throughout the curriculum in line with DfE guidance.</p> <p>The lead will engage with our local research school and English hub to develop the quality of English and literacy teaching through CPD.</p>	<p>There is strong evidence that teachers' pedagogical and content knowledge within specific subjects has a significant impact on pupil outcomes:</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-reading-framework-teaching-the-foundations-of-literacy</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks2</p>	1
<p>CPD for teaching staff on developing pupils' reading skills.</p> <p>Allocated LSA time for updating key word and literacy displays</p>	<p>Evidence from research suggests that teachers must carefully teach key literacy skills in their subject to improve pupils' subject specific vocabulary.</p>	1
<p>Purchase of an additional half day per week of Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) time for delivery of targeted support.</p>	<p>Child Speech (SLCN intervention) to deliver evidenced interventions to support children's speech, language and communication.</p> <p>What works database (ican.org.uk)</p>	2, 3

	This has been endorsed by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists.	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: **£12,700**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
One-to-one SLCN Interventions with Speech and Language Therapist	<p>Meeting the individual language needs of students, increased engagement and confidence to help them access and progress across curriculum areas.</p> <p>Using techniques such as memory retraining, cognitive reorganisation, language enhancement, and efforts to improve abstract thinking; speech therapists can ensure children can benefit from a more successful and satisfying educational experience as well as improved peer relationships.</p> <p>http://www.unlockinglanguage.co.uk</p>	1, 2, 5
Targeted weekly sessions of Maths and English that focus on numeracy and literacy skills for identified students	<p>Older students tend to have varied profiles of needs for support. Either they have specific needs often related to a deficit in one area of literacy which can be addressed with a targeted programme or they have more complex and individual profiles of helpful and less helpful knowledge and skills.</p> <p>https://www.ucl.ac.uk/reading-recovery-europe/sites/reading-recovery-europe/files/research_evidence_informing_grow.pdf</p> <p>Numeracy is an important area of learning for young people, not only as a fundamental element of mathematics but also as a life skill that gives students a foundation to succeed in learning and access the wider curriculum</p>	1

	<p>(Education Scotland, 2019).</p> <p>The EEF demonstrates the small group intervention can add 4months of progress for participants across the course of a year. It also reveals that small group tuition is most likely to be effective if it is targeted at pupils' specific needs.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition</p>	
<p>Provision of specialist equipment to support individualised needs eg. Laptops for students requiring support with dyslexia</p>	<p>Using such technology enables the pupil to gain independence and reduces the stigma of having to rely on others to access the written word.</p> <p>https://studyingwithdyslexiablog.co.uk/</p>	6
<p>Providing bespoke programmes for students requiring alternative learning provision in addition to their core academic subjects in order to meet their needs</p>	<p>Wolf review of vocational education</p> <p>First, it is an essential part of a broad curriculum. Just as much as academic education, vocational learning provides invaluable opportunities for young people to develop their potential and expand what they know, understand and can do; and to gain recognition for that learning which allows them to progress as they move to adulthood.</p> <p>https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/180868/Wolf-Review-Response.pdf</p>	4, 6

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

Budgeted cost: **£2,400**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Creation of a “Sensory” room – Used to develop students’ self regulation of behaviour.</p>	<p>We have observed and recorded that the sensory equipment and resources such as large bean bags, sensory lighting, weighted blankets and additional equipment has been effective at meeting the needs of our pupils. The sensory room provides support for our pupils with sensory needs. It is also used by a significant number of pupils as a strategy to manage their behaviours related to their SEMH needs</p>	<p>3, 6</p>
<p>One-to-one and small group mentoring – Used to develop a positive relationship with education and to facilitate multi agency working with families</p>	<p>Identified students with issues around self-esteem and relationships with peers.</p> <p>The EEF recognises that mentoring in education can be extremely beneficial for young people who have low aspirations and self-esteem, mentoring can build confidence, develop resilience and raise aspirations. It can also embed the skills required for strong lasting relationships built on trust.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/mentoring</p>	<p>3, 5, 6</p>
<p>Ongoing support for Year 11 leavers in their transition to higher education</p>	<p>Becoming NEET limits life chances and engagement in education is a protective factor from a range of harms. Bespoke, needs-based interventions are needed to support these year 11 pupils transition to post-16 provision successfully.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/guidance/alternative-provision-year-11-transition-funding#purpose-of-the-fund</p>	<p>3, 4, 5</p>

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 2023 to 2024 academic year.

The national lockdown, school closures and subsequent discontinuity of face to face teaching has impacted negatively on pupils' rates of academic progress and social and emotional development. There has also been a decline in pupils' wellbeing and mental health.

These factors, as well as pupils' contextual factors, can negatively impact on Pupil Progress and most negatively on pupils eligible for Pupil Premium. The most effective way to ensure pupils' outcomes improve is to promote positive engagement with school. Interventions to support mental health, the offer of therapeutic support and facilities on site (such as the sensory spaces) meant that 75% of pupils attending St Matthias had improved their attendance compared to their previous school. In addition, the percentage of persistently absent pupils in receipt of PP was less than the school cohort. Pupil Voice indicates that the overwhelming majority of pupils feel positive about their time at St Matthias.

Considerable work has been done to improve the provision for promoting reading within the school. An Additional reading programme has been purchased (Reading Wise) and with MNSP Trust lead support, a new Reading Strategy has been developed [St Matthias Reading Booklet .docx](#). The results from 2023-24 indicated that all pupils improved their reading at least by chronological age.

Analysis of the data shows that our mentoring interventions have a corresponding positive impact on student social and emotional progress. Furthermore, we have seen a reduction in challenging and aggressive behaviours as pupils have access to a calming, sensory space. This in turn is impacting positively on pupil and staff wellbeing. The number of Positive Handling incidents has decreased from 56 in the 2018/19 academic year to 12 in 2023/24 and the number of students receiving a fixed term suspension also decreased.