



**Maria Fidelis**  
Catholic School FCJ

## Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

### School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Maria Fidelis Catholic School
Number of pupils in school	745
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	61.8% (y7 to y11)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers ( <b>3 year plans are recommended</b> )	Jan 2025-Dec 2028
Date this statement was most recently published	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2026
Statement authorised by	Mark Anthony (Head Teacher)
Pupil premium lead	Clive Coombes (Assistant Head Teacher)
Governor / Trustee lead	Modesto Tondelli (Vice Chair of Governors)

## Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£468,700
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
<b>Total budget for this academic year</b> If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	£468,700

## Glossary

Acronym / term	Meaning
CEIAG	Careers Education, Information, Advice, and Guidance
CP	Child Protection
CPD	Continuous Professional Development (teacher training)
DfE	Department for Education
EBacc	English Baccalaureate (a suite of core GCSE subjects)
ECF	Early Careers Framework
ECT	Early Career Teacher (previously 'Newly Qualified Teacher')
EEF	Education Endowment Foundation
ELSA	Emotional Literacy Support Assistant
EP	Educational Psychologist
HoY	Head of Year
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KS3 KS4	Key Stage 3 (years 7 to 8) / Key Stage 4 (years 9 to 11)
LSA	Learning Support Assistant (previously 'Teaching Assistant')
PP	Pupil Premium (otherwise known as 'Disadvantaged' pupils)
SALT	Speech And Language Therapy
SEND	Special Educational Needs and/or Disability
TIP	Trauma Informed Practice

## Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

### Statement of intent

Maria Fidelis Catholic School's intention is that all pupils, irrespective of their background, or the personal challenges they face, become successful learners who enjoy learning, make good progress and achieve their potential.

Our aim is to prepare all pupils for the next stage of their education, and for a successful adult & working life; provide them with the widest range of experiences possible; build cultural capital, personal resilience, and inspire and enable them to make a lasting and positive contribution to future societies.

The guiding principles behind our Pupil Premium strategy build upon our existing knowledge of, and relationships with, our pupils, and so enable us to prioritise appropriate and effective actions and interventions.

We aim:

- To know our pupils as individuals and understand how best to support them
- To identify barriers to progress and plan strategies for their removal
- To implement interventions in partnership with families and other agencies
- To monitor, review and evaluate the success of our work, so that we are constantly striving to improve

We recognise that the wide-ranging challenges that our pupils may face are not simply economic disadvantage. Individual context is important to us and knowing our pupil population and responding to their changing needs is key.

We aim to be open and transparent with our parents about the Pupil Premium and our work with our pupils and recognise that effective and successful parental engagement is a key thread that runs through our work.

## Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Discussions with pupils and families suggest that the education and wellbeing of many of our disadvantaged pupils have been further impacted by the cost-of-living crisis and consequent financial pressures. These findings are backed up by several national studies. Evidenced by our internal tracking data, financial constraints on disadvantaged pupils' families has lead to curriculum coverage, knowledge, and achievement gaps in most year groups.
2	Assessments, observations, and discussion with KS3 pupils, provide evidence that disadvantaged pupils have lower levels of reading comprehension than their peers. In the most recent intake for which we have data, the average reading age of disadvantaged pupils is 11y 8.5m, as compared to 12y 8m for other pupils. It is our observation that lower reading comprehension negatively impacts on disadvantaged pupils' ability to access the curriculum.
3	Although we have robust and thorough attendance procedures in place for all pupils, our attendance data indicates that there is a gap between disadvantaged and other pupils' attendance. It is probable that this lower attendance is contributing towards the achievement gaps noted above.
4	<p>Our wellbeing surveys, observations and discussions with students and families have identified social and emotional issues for many pupils, such as anxiety, depression (diagnosed by medical professionals) and low self-esteem. This is partly driven by concern about catching up lost learning and future exams prospects.</p> <p>Many disadvantaged students come from backgrounds with multifaceted social issues, insufficient support networks, in additional to lower financial and material resource, meaning that these social challenges disproportionately affect the wellbeing of disadvantaged pupils.</p>
5	<p>Student voice and feedback from lessons have demonstrated that many students lack the confidence, motivation, resilience and communication that are so important for their success, both in school and in the workplace</p> <p>Disadvantaged children are less likely to get involved in extra-curricular activities and they are more likely to have less well-developed skills such as listening, speaking, problem solving, creativity, staying positive, motivation, leadership and teamwork. The lack of life skills inhibits students' ability to excel in school and later in adulthood.</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
Improved attainment and progress among disadvantaged pupils across the curriculum at the end of KS4, with a focus on EBacc subjects.	There will be no achievement gaps (attainment or progress) between disadvantaged and other pupils  For disadvantaged and other pupils Attainment 8 >50.0 Progress 8 >0.0
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Attendance of disadvantaged pupils will be as high as for other pupils (93.9% for 2024-2025) and above national attendance (91.9% for 2023-2024) Our school attendance target >93%
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.	Pupils, and their families, will report higher levels of wellbeing and satisfaction with their mental health, evidenced by regular surveys and improved educational outcomes.
Improved reading comprehension among disadvantaged pupils across KS3.	Reading comprehension of disadvantaged pupils will be as good as their peers, and in line with, or better than, national expectations. The improvement will be recognisable through learning engagement and work scrutiny.
To achieve and sustain improved metacognitive and self-regulatory skills among certain disadvantaged pupils.	Internal behaviour reporting and lesson observations provide evidence that certain disadvantaged pupils are more able to monitor and self-regulate their own engagement, learning and behaviour.
To help students develop life skills and behaviour traits that will improve their social mobility and job prospects.	This group of students have increased access to the extra-curricular activities likely to help them develop these essential skills. These opportunities are also provided within the school curriculum

## 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: £152,702

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p><b>Quality First Teaching</b> Internal and funded external CPD and teacher release time Subject network meetings Line management and peer support Professional Thursday time</p>	EEF research states that effective teaching is the key ingredient of a successful school and should be the top priority for Pupil Premium. For disadvantaged pupils the difference between a good teacher and a less effective teacher is a whole year's learning (DfE, 2015).	1
<p><b>Recruitment and retention</b> We enhance teachers' salaries where necessary to recruit and retain the best quality staff we can. We support ECTs using the ECF Core Induction Programme. This will help ECTs to develop embed challenge and support for all pupils including the disadvantaged.</p>	Government targets for teacher recruitment have been missed for six consecutive years up to 2019, and a third of new teachers leave within the first five years of joining the profession. And yet high-quality teaching is the thing that makes the biggest difference to young people's academic grades. (EEF, 2019). In our first-hand experience, recruiting excellent teachers has become more challenging in the few years.	1 4
<p><b>Remote learning</b> Google Classroom, devices, and online learning resources ICT remote delivery resourcing for staff</p>	Internal progress and engagement with learning data collected over school closures showed that disadvantaged pupils with access to high quality remote education lost less learning than those who didn't.	1 4
<p><b>Improved literacy &amp; Oracy</b> We will provide internal and funded external CPD and release time to improve literacy for disadvantaged pupils.</p>	Acquiring subject disciplinary literacy and oracy is key for pupils as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject. The EEF Improving Literacy in Schools guidance highlights that reading comprehension, vocabulary and literacy skills are linked with attainment in English and Maths.	2
<p><b>Developing Life Skills</b> The curriculum is designed to provide opportunities to develop oracy , communication and resilience. This is complemented with</p>	The Sutton Trust Report <i>Life Lessons 2024</i> emphasises the importance of helping students develop life skills and oracy, both of which are valued by employers and universities.	5

House activities and opportunities for students participate in competitions and events out of school.		
<b>In-curriculum intervention</b> Intervention groups in core subjects provided through over-staffing in years 10 and 11	Extra capacity in the core subjects provides the flexibility needed to allow existing teachers to deliver interventions for disadvantaged pupils.	1

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

Budgeted cost: £211,422

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<b>In class LSA support</b> Learning Support Assistants deployed in classrooms to specifically support disadvantaged pupils' education recovery as a result of school closures	The EEF states that 1:1 tuition/classroom support can accelerate progress by up to 5 months. Our methodology aims to utilise LSAs in a flexible way that can allow for the classroom teacher to support individuals, whilst the LSA supervises a class activity.	1 2 3 4
<b>Additional vocational options</b> Non-GCSE options added to the Key Stage 4 curriculum offered to support the academic progress and school engagement of some harder to reach disadvantaged pupils.	We have developed our curriculum model over recent years to allow for more bespoke curriculum pathways for certain pupils. These curriculum pathways have historically supported certain disadvantage pupils in being better engaged with their lessons and making greater academic progress	1 2 3
<b>Small group intervention</b> Targeted intervention sessions for Year 11 pupils at the end of the school day and Saturdays	Small group intervention sessions will allow for individualised support and immediate feedback in a small group setting, which are identified as "high impact" strategies in the EEF.	1 2 3
<b>Speech and language therapy</b> SALT sessions provided for targeted disadvantaged pupils.	Individual SALT sessions will allow for individualised support in accessing the curriculum, engaging with learning, and taking an active part in lessons.	1 2 4
<b>Easter school</b> Programme of curriculum and PE activities during the Easter holidays offered to all	Small group tuition sessions provided in Easter holiday period will provide social and emotional support for pupils, as well as meta-cognition and study support, which are identified as "high impact" strategies in the EEF.	1 4

pupils, but targeted at disadvantaged pupils		
<b>Exam preparation support</b> Externally lead Study skills session provided and revision guides brought for disadvantaged pupils	Revision guides will ensure that disadvantaged pupils have access to the same resources as other pupils. Providing pupils with these exam preparation tools removes significant barriers to learning.	1 4

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

Budgeted cost: £110,856

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<b>Attendance</b> Attendance Officer & Heads of Year closely monitor attendance of all disadvantaged children and liaise with parents and outside agencies as appropriate. Embedding the principles of the DfE Improving School Attendance guidance.	We have employed someone to work directly with families where the pupils are not meeting our attendance targets. This includes first day absence calling (prioritising vulnerable pupils), individual attendance targets, and ultimately penalty notices. Improving attendance means children have improved continuity with learning, and build better relationships	3
<b>Wellbeing support</b> Through HOYs, ST Ignatius staff and SEND team	Family support is offered through the pastoral and SEND teams, and designated safeguarding lead. Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) research shows two studies found that improving parental engagement can lead to a +3 month progress impact.	4
<b>Behaviour support</b> Behaviour mentors, HOYs, CP Liaison, EPs, ELSA and counselling are in place to ensure that disadvantaged children feel supported in school and confident to attend. Behaviour curriculum ('The MF Way') explicitly taught and revisited. Identification of behaviour "hotspots" (lessons/times) where disadvantaged pupils struggle, informing targeted support.	According to the EEF, social and emotional support can accelerate progress by 4 months.	1 4
<b>Trauma Informed Practice</b> Adoption of a TIP intervention programme to support certain	There is evidence to suggest that TIP can have a high impact on	1 3 4

disadvantaged pupils' behaviour and self-regulation. To include internal and funded external CPD for all staff	behavioural difficulties and their resolution. EIF's report on mental health found strong evidence that TIP interventions support pupils' social and emotional skills and reduce symptoms and anxiety and depression. Suspensions are decreasing as a result.	
<b>CEIAG</b> All disadvantaged children have a 1:1 meeting with an independent careers advisor to support their options choices for Post-16.	Providing PP children with independent careers advice will support them in making informed decisions about their Post-16 choices. It will also support them in raising aspirations for their futures by giving them detailed information about their Post-16 options.	1,4
<b>Free instrumental lessons</b>	Case studies on the EEF's website. We want disadvantaged pupils to develop interests outside of the classroom which will make them well rounded and happy individuals.	4

**Total budgeted cost: £475,000**

## 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 2024 to 2025 and 2023 to 2024 academic years

#### Performance data for academic year 2024-2025

Group	Cohort size	Progress 8	Attainment 8
Cohort	143	N/A	41.9
Male	84	N/A	41.1
Female	59	N/A	43.1
Disadvantaged	88	N/A	38.8
Other	55	N/A	46.8

#### Performance data for academic year 2022-2023

Group	Cohort size	Progress 8	Attainment 8
Cohort	137	-0.57	41.8
Male	81	-0.64	38.4
Female	56	-0.33	44.8
Disadvantaged	64	-0.67	38.3
Other	73	-0.39	44.0

The school remains committed to its approach of delivering high quality teaching, and a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all of our pupils. We are still striving to recruit the best quality teaching staff that we can (in the midst of the current recruitment crisis) to support this aim.

We will continue to employ the following best practice strategies to narrow the gap:

- One to one, small group or peer academic tuition
- Targeted interventions to support language development, literacy and numeracy
- Targeted interventions and resources to meet the specific needs of disadvantaged pupils with SEND
- Learning support assistant deployment and interventions
- Supporting pupils' social, emotional, and behavioural needs
- Supporting attendance
- Supporting parents

## Externally provided programmes

*Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you purchased in the previous academic year. This will help the Department for Education identify which ones are popular in England*

Programme	Provider
N/A	