

Pupil premium strategy statement – St Clare’s Catholic Primary School

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	312
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	42%
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)	2023-24 2024-25 2025-26
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2026
Statement authorised by	Jamie Whiteside
Pupil premium lead	Hannah Smith
Governor / Trustee lead	Elaine Heaphy

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£186,362.00
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>	£186,362.00

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At St Clare's we strive to provide a broad and ambitious curriculum full of rich experiences and opportunities for all. This enables every single child in our community to be the very best they can be. The focus of our pupil premium grant is to create equity for all our pupils where everyone has the opportunity to succeed, regardless of the circumstances.

Tendring has one of the highest levels of social deprivation, Clacton ranks among the top 1% of deprived neighbourhoods. Tendring sees a higher share of pupils underachieving and not attaining in all primary phase outcomes. The principle behind our funding allocation is to ensure every child meets their own potential and St Clare's pupils defy this trend.

High quality teaching is a key principle in our approach. Teachers are passionate and seek to ensure all children learn well using research based teaching principles. Our curriculum enables children to remember the content and deepen understanding of concepts over time. For each child's earliest starting point we identify opportunities for facilitating progression and continuity. Pupils make rapid progress in Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional development and Early Reading.

We recognise that a number of our pupils have complex needs which can be barriers to learning. We ensure these primary needs are identified and met in order that they can fully access our academic offer. Teaching staff, the pastoral team and outside agencies work together to provide the best outcomes for every individual. Our curriculum is led by specialists, it provides the children with experiences and opportunities beyond their everyday lives to achieve success.

Our strategy is focused on identifying what each child needs to be successful and achieve. In order to do this we:

- Deliver high quality teaching
- Reduce class sizes at entry and exit points.
- Regularly review the progress and performance of all pupils to ensure our approaches are impactful.
- A carefully planned and adapted curriculum to reflect the needs and community ensuring depth, progression and high-quality delivery
- OPAL play and SEN/Nurture Hub are available to ensure all the social, emotional and developmental needs are identified, supported and met.

All our work through the pupil premium will be aimed at accelerating progress, moving children to at least age related expectations.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<p>Significantly below average on entry data for EYFS pupils</p> <p>Internal assessments from our Nursery setting and the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) information show that 70% of our children come in significantly below where they should.</p>
2	<p>Vocabulary</p> <p>55% of pupils (2025) enter below expectations for speaking and listening (Wellcomm). We know that children's vulnerabilities can be enhanced through their inability to communicate.</p>
3	<p>Phonics</p> <p>Children enter EYFS without a secure knowledge of Phase 1 phonics. They enter significantly lower on entry and need time to consolidate their knowledge of Phase 1 before moving on.</p>
4	<p>KS2 Reading</p> <p><i>Research from the National Literacy Trust this year found that 34.6% of young people, aged between eight and eighteen, said they enjoy reading in their free time. This is a sharp decline from 43.4% just last year and the lowest level on record since the charity started the survey in 2005.</i></p> <p>Due to their low starting points, some children need to consolidate phase 5, especially the full coverage of alternative sounds from phase 5c onwards. Some children enter KS2 lacking in confidence in applying reading strategies covered throughout the phonics scheme.</p>
5	<p>Play and Outside Opportunities</p> <p>Not all families are able to provide opportunities for play and physical exertion and as such some children's physical development and behaviour and attitudes requires explicit development through skilful PE teaching and sporting opportunities.</p>
6	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Not all families prioritise attendance. Children and parents' physical health, taking holidays, attitudinal reasons and punctuality are all contributing factors. This results in their development being delayed and academic achievement impeded.</p>
7	<p>Community</p> <p>Many carers, children, colleagues and external agencies require a lead professional as a point of contact at St Clare's in order that children's welfare is of the highest possible standard.</p>
8	<p>Lack of opportunity</p> <p>Many of our children have limited experiences of clubs and may not be able to afford specialist instructors therefore musical, physical and theatrical talent may go unidentified.</p>

9	<p>Mental Well Being</p> <p>Some children’s SEMH profile inhibits their ability to behave appropriately and safely in the school environment.</p>
10	<p>Parental Support</p> <p>Some of our families have lived through or have endured trauma which requires specialist provision in order for them to build strong relationships with school, achieve success in school, at home and in the community. Not all our families recognise the value in fully engaging with all school curriculum.</p>
11	<p>Diet</p> <p>Not all families are able to provide a healthy breakfast for children and as such hunger can impede physical development, motivation, attention and therefore achievement.</p>
12	<p>Gaps in knowledge and understanding the curriculum.</p> <p>Some of our pupils have a lack of resilience and low self-esteem preventing a number of them from fully engaging in their learning. This has resulted in significant knowledge gaps leading to some pupils falling behind age related expectations.</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
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils.	<p>Breakfast club is well attended</p> <p>More children have achieved their bronze, silver and gold attendance certificates.</p> <p>Aquinas are required to support less families.</p> <p>Reduced persistent absent indicators.</p> <p>Reduced persistent late indicators.</p>
Improved oral and language skills and vocabulary among pupils.	<p>Improved WellComm scores in KS1</p> <p>Children can access vocabulary rich curriculum.</p> <p>Effectively communicate with their peers, staff and families.</p> <p>Evidence can be seen through engagement in lessons and ongoing WellComm assessments.</p>
Children make a good level of progress in early reading.	<p>The reading GLD is in line with the national average.</p> <p>Rigorous half termly assessments show progress and clearly identify gaps in knowledge to ensure all children ‘keep up’.</p> <p>Phonics data results were at 76%.</p>
Children make a good level of progress in the curriculum.	<p>Children’s progress is tracked through pupil progress meetings. Progress is recorded on</p>

	<p>SONAR, NFER testing and the Cornerstones assessment tool.</p> <p>Assessment lead and SLT monitor and evaluate progress.</p> <p>Children leave each year group with age appropriate skills and knowledge.</p>
To achieve and sustain improved well-being for all pupils in our school.	Children can talk about their emotions and self-regulate. Children are happy and are able to learn.

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: £158,914

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Extra teacher to create smaller class sizes EYFS (1) and UKS2(1)	Ensuring an effective teacher is in front of every class, is the key ingredient of a successful school and should rightly be a top priority for pupil premium spending. EEF PPG Guide 2022	1,2, 8, 12
Librarian LSA	The librarian organises and ensures our system in up to date allowing the children to have regular access to high quality books and encourages children to have a love of reading.	2,3,4,8
Cultural Champions	The work we do on embedding cultural experiences into our curriculum broadens children's background knowledge and helps to develop their language skills helping them to understand the world beyond their own experiences.	8,12
Cookery LSA	Cooking offers children to develop opportunities they may not have at home and for them to learn nutritional value and the importance of a balanced diet.	8, 11
ELSA Support TA	Pupil surveys show that children who have participated in ELSA have stated that the strategies have had a positive impact on their mental health. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning	2,9, 10
LSAs to support disadvantaged children with	The school has trained LSAs in TPP (Trauma Perceptive Practice) and employed experienced LSAs with training in	9, 10, 12

SEMH and complex needs to improve learning attitudes and to support closing the gaps of disadvantaged pupils with non-disadvantaged pupils.	SEMH and dealing complex emotional needs to support our disadvantaged children. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £2,068

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Alternative Provision A targeted intervention for children with significant and complex needs.</p> <p>A targeted intervention to support children's SEMH needs (nurture room)</p>	<p>Children follow a personalised curriculum in an environment that is suitable for their developmental stage and individual needs. This includes creating a purposeful area where specialised equipment and highly trained professionals support children's progress.</p> <p>Children follow a structured bespoke SEMH curriculum providing them with opportunities to develop and assess against their 6 core strengths. This approach supports children attendance, reintegration into class and their ability to regulate.</p>	6, 9, 10,12

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

Budgeted cost: £25,380

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Aquinas Solutions: To support parents in improving the overall attendance by addressing the barriers and finding solutions.	In Klein's research on absenteeism... research overwhelmingly shows that school absenteeism is negatively associated with students' academic achievement (Aucejo & Romano, 2016 ; Gottfried, 2010, 2011 ; Gottfried & Kirksey, 2017 ; Kirksey, 2019 ; Morrissey et al., 2014).	6

	<p>Aquinas works with the school and parents to support better attendance through a number of ways: looking at attendance data, contacting parents, letters or home visits and meetings with school, pastoral team and attendance to remove barriers to attendance.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/ParentalEngagement/EEF_Parental_Engagement_Guidance_Report.pdf</p> <p>St Clare's is part of the Tending Attendance initiative working with school partnerships across the area and local authority to improve attendance strategies to engage families.</p>	
<p>Core Values Initiative: St Clare's six core values have been promoted through assemblies, lessons, OPAL, communications with the parents and highly visible display boards and badges for each "core champion".</p>	<p>Meta-cognition studies have shown that learners can thrive no matter the environment: Resilient students are described by Alva (1991) as those who maintain high motivational achievement and performance even when faced with stressful events and conditions that place them at risk of poor performance.</p> <p>At St Clare's we believe that through our core values we are able to promote both academic and non-academic skills that will help all our children thrive.</p>	7, 9, 12
<p>Family Liaison Officer: Parents in need of support to enable the children to be in a more secure position emotionally and generally. Family Liaison Officer in school one and a half days per week.</p>	<p>The school has employed a therapist who works with families and children to support their needs which impact on school life. The therapist has successfully supported children with a range of social, emotional and mental health needs.</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning</p>	7, 9
<p>Coolmilk at school: Children have the opportunity to have milk at break time with their snack.</p>	<p>Children have better concentration with good nutrition.</p>	11
<p>Breakfast Club: Children have a better start to the day having eaten breakfast.</p>	<p>Children have better concentration with good nutrition.</p>	6, 10, 11
<p>Support costs of Y6 trip: disadvantaged pupils participating in residential trips such as PGL.</p>	<p>Improved opportunities for all. Improved attendance on the trip.</p>	7,8,10

Total budgeted cost: £ 186,362

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Our internal and external assessments and data during 2024/25 indicate that our strategy has had a positive impact during its third year of implementation. The strategy and its actions have been revised in light of the analysis of these outcomes and are outlined in the document sections above.

There are 15 pupil premium eligible pupils in this cohort of EYFS pupils.

64.3% of our pupil premium pupils achieved GLD compared to nationally at 51%. We have been able to close the gap by 13% compared to the national average. This represents good progress from the children's starting point and that a good proportion of children have made better than average progress. It is clear that our strategy to focus on developing the children's communication and language skills along with their social and emotional skills to ensure they are ready for learning has had a significant impact already.

There are 24 pupil premium eligible pupils in this cohort of year 1 pupils.

Our Year 1 phonics check showed positive outcomes for our Pupil Premium Pupils. 77% of our PPG children passed the phonic check compared to the national average 67%.

KS2

Our outcomes for the end of KS2 shows that most of our disadvantaged pupils leave St Clare's with a good level of attainment in all core areas of learning.

There were 22 pupil premium eligible pupils in this cohort of Year 6 pupils

91% met or exceeded ARE in reading

68% met or exceeded ARE in writing

86% met or exceeded ARE in Maths

68% combined

68% of disadvantaged pupils achieved combined this year, compared to 47% nationally. We are 21% above the national average.

The gap between disadvantaged and non in our school for combined is 4%, compared to a gap of 21% nationally. We have closed the gap between our disadvantaged and non 17% more than nationally.

293 hours of family liaison sessions were provided for pupils and families, including disadvantaged pupils. 100% of pupils and their families feel this had a positive impact on self-esteem and well-being.

190 hours of play therapy were provided for pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. This targeted support was aimed at our younger pupils with significant trauma.

234 hours of ELSA- Emotional Literacy Support were delivered to pupils including disadvantaged pupils and two staff trained in the award. 100% of pupils receiving support had improved well-being scores in pre and post intervention assessments.

All teaching staff were trained in Trauma Perceptive Practice (TPP) and it continues to underpin our practice. This year, as a school, we have participated in a wide range of experiences designed to enhance and support the cultural development of our pupils. This has included training two Cultural

Leaders with the Royal Opera House in Art and Drama. We have also welcomed an artist, Hannah Buck, who delivered a whole-school art day; pupils' work was then displayed in a public gallery at the Martello Tower.

The children have taken part in a variety of musical experiences including Young Voices, BCCS, and choir performances such as singing at a local care home. Additionally, we have been involved in a two-year programme called The Hero's Journey, where six children received specialist tuition, mentoring, and costumes culminating in a performance at the Electric Palace.

We have also offered a range of drama workshops for both lower and upper Key Stage 2, alongside media workshops for Key Stage 1.

We will continue to provide additional and targeted support for all children ensuring that every pupil has access to high-quality cultural and creative experiences.