

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2023 to 2025 academic year) funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged students.

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 Thomas More School
Number of students in school	946
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible students	18%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2023-25
Date this statement was published	December 2023
Date on which it will be reviewed	March 2023
Statement authorised by	Martin Bonner
Pupil premium lead	Carole Soraghan
Governor / Trustee lead	Cathy Piotrowski

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£168,705
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£44,988
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	£213,693

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

As a community of faith and learning based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ, his values and teachings, we seek constantly to improve everything we do so that we can make a difference for the young people who will shape the society of the future. Our intention is that all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, and with a clear focus on diversity and inclusion, make excellent progress and achieve high attainment across the curriculum. We aim to achieve this through living out the words of John's Gospel which is 'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.' We are guided by the 7 principles of Catholic Social teaching and in particular the preferential option for the poor.

The STM approach continues to be to consider the learning needs of groups of students, and address these needs, using whichever strategy we believe is most likely to succeed. Essentially, our approach has been to put the learning first. Our approach is based on contemporary research; the learning of our students and the belief that high quality teaching is the best way to ensure disadvantaged students achieve well.

The most obvious finding from EEF research is that the quality of teaching and learning is the most important factor in allowing all students, but especially disadvantaged students, to achieve progress. The average student makes 40% more progress with highly effective teaching than they do with poor teaching. A disadvantaged student can make 50% less progress than the average student with poor teaching. This shows that disadvantaged children are disproportionately affected by the quality of teaching. Therefore, a continual priority for STM has been the quality of teaching. This view was supported by Sir Michael Wilshaw, speaking at a Sutton Trust and Education Endowment Foundation event on the 1st July 2015, when he said: "[school improvement was] not about using pupil premium money to employ additional staff and lots of teaching assistants, learning mentors and psychotherapists...It's about employing good teachers who can teach across the ability range.

Viviane Robinson showed that there are five dimensions of effective school leadership. All of these dimensions related to improved outcomes for students, but the one that stands out is that of leading teacher learning and development, i.e. developing teachers' capacity to identify issues, improve their own practice, collaborate with colleagues and take control over their learning. With this in mind STM has had a wide-ranging programme of CPD that is evidence based and is at the centre of school development plans. We have also benefitted from being part of a Teaching School Hub, which allows us to access, and engage with the latest thinking in teacher development and the school is part of a Trust, OLICAT, which has professional development at the heart of its work.

Targeted interventions will continue to be a key focus throughout 2023-2024 for all children based on their gaps and barriers to knowledge. Some interventions will be delivered outside of the classroom with specialist one to one tuition in Phonics, Reading and Numeracy to ensure that children are making progress from their starting points. Other interventions will take place through additional support in the classroom during lessons.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	The maths attainment of disadvantaged students is generally lower than that of their peers and teacher diagnostic assessments suggest that many students particularly struggle with problem solving tasks. Assessments on entry to year 7 in the last 2 years indicate that between 50-60% of our disadvantaged students arrive below age-related expectations compared to 40-44% of their peers.
2	Assessments, observations and discussion with KS3 students indicate that disadvantaged students generally have lower levels of reading comprehension than peers. This affects their progress in all subjects. On entry to year 7 in the last 2 years, between 50-57% of our disadvantaged students arrive below age-related expectations compared to 10-15% of their peers.
3	Some of our PP students lack self-esteem and/or have a poor perception of school or staff. This effects motivation and engagement.
4	Our observations suggest many lower attaining disadvantaged students lack metacognitive / self-regulation strategies when faced with challenging tasks, notably in their monitoring and evaluation of their answers. This is indicated across the curriculum.
5	Our assessments (including wellbeing survey), observations and discussions with students and families have identified social and emotional issues for many students, such as anxiety, depression (diagnosed by medical professionals) and low self-esteem. This is partly driven by concern about catching up lost learning and exams/future prospects, and the lack of enrichment opportunities due to the pandemic. These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged students, including their attainment.
6	Some of our PP children suffer from material or electronic disadvantage which limits access to learning and to extra-curricular experiences.
7	Our attendance data over the last 2 years indicates that attendance among disadvantaged students has been between lower than for non-disadvantaged students. 55% of disadvantaged students have been 'persistently absent' across the 2 year period. Our assessments and observations indicate that absenteeism is negatively affecting disadvantaged students' progress.
8	Some of our PP students have difficulties in accessing the language required for learning due to EAL challenges. Assessments, observations, and discussions with students indicate underdeveloped oral language skills and vocabulary gaps among many disadvantaged students.
9	Some of our PP student's families suffer financial hardship and this has affected their ability to travel to school, purchase school uniform and take part in extra-curricular activities such as trips.

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
All non-SEND PP Children improve their reading ages	<p>Reading programmes in place for Stanine 1-3 readers across Year 7-10</p> <p>Reading Protocols embedded in lessons</p> <p>DEAL embedded in registration for Year 7 and 8</p> <p>Literacy Evening offered for Year 7-9 parents November 2023</p> <p>Lesson Visits will identify good practice of approaches towards Disciplinary Reading</p> <p>On-going CPD on How to improve Literacy in schools based on the EEF recommendations</p> <p>2023 NGRT reading ages will have improved by July 2024</p>
Achieve average English and maths 5+ scores for similar schools	<p>Termly Tracking Data will indicate PP students are making progress across the curriculum</p> <p>Post Mock Meetings for Year 11 will identify what PP students need further intervention based on exam performance</p> <p>GCSE results August 2024 will show a narrowing of the gap between PP and Non PP students from 2023</p> <p>Academic Mentor for Maths to support one to one or in small groups across year groups</p> <p>Maths Intervention in place for Year 11 students during registration time</p> <p>Numeracy Evening offered to Year 7-9 parents November 2023</p>
All PP students have access to further learning opportunities outside of school hours.	<p>New chrome books will be purchased for those who do not have IT access at home</p> <p>Records of PP students who have been issued a chrome book will be maintained</p>
Children who have been identified as requiring additional pastoral support receive this for the length of time that it is required.	<p>EHAs in place for those families most in need</p> <p>Internal mentoring in place for those in need</p> <p>Termly tracking will show students are making progress</p> <p>Alternative provision pathways for those in need</p>
There is a clear, well-managed learning support policy, which ensures classrooms are productive and safe.	<p>Support in place for any PP students who needs support with behaviour through mentoring and PSP process</p> <p>Weekly Behaviour Training in place for staff to revisit previous training</p>
The attendance of targeted PP children who are persistent absentees improves.	<p>Attendance gaps of PP and non PP students is narrowed</p> <p>Persistent absentee rate for PP and non PP students is narrowed</p> <p>Regular sharing of attendance for PP students to be shared by SLT Lead for Attendance and support put in place to those who need it</p> <p>Attendance Panels for all Year Groups to be in place</p>

Intended outcome	Success criteria
	Attendance Officer in place September 2023
Children in receipt of the PP have equal access to all the school offers in terms of cultural capital provision.	Financial support offered for those PP students for trips and extra-curricular activities offered by the school. Academic resources bought for PP students to ensure equal access to the 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: £106,846

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>All evidence including that of our own experience, the Sutton Trust and EEF toolkits and the Ofsted guidance is clear that quality teaching has a disproportionate impact on pupil premium children. We are striving to ensure that teaching is at least good across our school</p> <p>We have a launched a central CPD strand, embracing and implementing the work of The Learning Scientists in lessons. All teaching and learning strategies are rooted in research evidence and allow students to transfer key knowledge to the long-term memory</p>		
<p>Continue to Invest in training to ensure that quality first teaching is always supported and remains a goal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing high quality training for all staff in high quality teaching of vocabulary; Metacognition, Promoting Positive Behaviour, De-escalation, Forest School Provision, Phonics Development, Teaching the More Able, Disciplinary Reading, Oracy Language Interventions, Effective Feedback to promote Pupil Progress, How to improve Literacy using the EEF recommendations, Five a Day EEF To improve SEND outcomes, How to teach KS3 students • Trust support in developing Subject leaders to monitor standards in teaching across the school through Peer Reviews- cover provided to facilitate this • Borough support to develop Middle Leaders through PSG meetings • Individual Middle Leaders to coach new staff in subject areas- time to be set aside on timetables for this to happen 	<p>Our CPD cycle is supported by the Sutton Trust and EEF toolkits, which identify a focus on key things, which have the most significant national impact on achievement and progress.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A school-wide understanding of metacognition and self-regulation 2. Reading comprehension activities 3. Oracy Language Interventions 4. Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning 	<p>1, 2, 3,</p>

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key staff at STM to lead Borough PSG meetings to share good practice across the curriculum- cover provided to facilitate this • Continued training and development for middle leaders to support with monitoring the impact of our intent, implementation and impact across all subject areas through Professional Development Programme • Cover for middle leaders and TLR post holders to monitor standards and to support where there are areas for further development; • Continued training for LSA's on reading and other SEND provision • One LSA to become responsible for the Reading Programme in place for Stanine 1 and 2 readers • New SENCO to complete SENCO Qualification and cascade training to staff • Key staff to complete NPQ's and cover to be provided to allow staff to attend sessions • 		
<p>Improving literacy in all subjects</p> <p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students to have their reading Ages assessed through the NGRT and GL Assessments • LSA and Teacher training with Trust support for Reading to improve disciplinary reading across the curriculum • Additional Training for the LSA's on Phonics • Purchase of materials to support the Phonics and Reading programme • Development of the teaching of writing like an expert • Development of Oracy across the curriculum • Invest in the Library facilities to encourage reading for pleasure across the school • Purchase four sets of books to be used by Year 7 and 8 as part of DEAL • Purchase more suitable fiction books for the school Library for Year 7 and 8 • Literacy Lead to attend Literacy CPD offered by the Trust and to cascade to staff via the Professional Development Programme 	<p>We will use the recommendations outlined in the EEF Guidance Reports on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving Literacy in Secondary School • Making Effective Use of Teaching Assistants • Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning 	<p>1, 2, 3</p>

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition Lead in English to liaise with Primary Schools on the English curriculum and its implementation 		
<p>Narrow Numeracy gaps across the curriculum.</p> <p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 7 students to have their ability in Maths assessed through the GL suite of assessments Numeracy Interventions in place for low attaining disadvantaged students through appointing 2 TLR holders in Maths to lead strategies in Maths Academic Mentor in Maths to support interventions across the Maths curriculum Numeracy Parents Evening organised and delivered by the Numeracy lead KS3 SOL in Maths to be re-written to take into account the recommendations of the Improving Mathematics at KS3 Guidance report from the EEF 	<p>We have used the recommendations from the EEF Guidance Report on Improving Mathematics at Key Stage 2 and 3 to revise the KS3 curriculum and identify students requiring intervention on entry to the school and put high quality interventions in place</p>	<p>1, 2, 3</p>

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

Budgeted cost: £53,423

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Academic Mentor in Maths to be employed to support students with gaps in Numeracy across all year groups</p>	<p>One to one or small group tuition has proven to have good measurable outcomes and the Sutton Trust EEF Toolkit shows that this strategy can add 5 months to student progress across one year.</p>	<p>1, 2, 3</p>
<p>Targeted reading catch up delivered by LSAs and Sixth Form students for those who have been identified as stanine 2-3 in reading through the Fluency and Peer Reading programmes</p>	<p>Sutton Trust EEF Toolkit Reading Comprehension Strategies are shown to add 6 months progress over the course of one year Peer Tutoring</p>	<p>2, 3</p>
<p>Delivery of additional phonics for children not making expected progress in this area through targeted catch up delivered by LSAs identified as stanine 1 in reading through a Phonics Programme</p>	<p>EEF Guidance Report on Improving Literacy Secondary Schools recommends providing high quality literacy</p>	<p>2, 3</p>

	interventions for struggling students	
Engagement of the Speech and Language therapist to support individual children with S & L	The EEF have found that the average impact of oral language interventions and development is approximately an additional six months progress over the course of a year.	2, 3, 8
A proportion of the PP budget £27,000 to be set aside to purchase academic materials/resources by departments to support individual students with their development across the curriculum through a bid system	The EEF Toolkit indicates that participation in Sports and the Arts have all been proven to have positive impacts on learning, improved attitudes and enjoyment at school.	1, 2, 3, 6,9
A proportion of the PP budget £10,000 to be set aside to invest in Chromebooks to support completion of homework/coursework	The EEF toolkit shows that completing homework has high impact for low cost adding an additional 5 months progress over the course of a year. As we set our homework online, we have purchased Chrome Books to ensure that PP students can access their homework and complete it.	1, 2, 3, 6,

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

Budgeted cost: £53,423

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Embedding principles of good practice set out in DfE's Improving School Attendance September 2022 advice to improve School Attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLT Lead for Attendance to regularly share data on attendance for PP students with Pastoral Leads • Pupil Premium students raised as priority for first day response • Attendance Panels held and results communicated to parents • Regular liaison with EWO service and recommendations for further actions if required • Fortnightly meetings with SLT Lead for Attendance and Pastoral Leads to put tiered action in place 	<p>DfE Guidance September 2023 is followed and all the recommendations are rooted in best practice informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DfE engagement with schools who have significantly reduced their persistent absence levels, Teachers standards • OFSTED School handbook • DfE statutory and non-statutory guidance • Bedford Borough attendance toolkit 	1,2,3, 4, 5, 7, 9

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of PP allocation (£ 10,000) to be reserved to support families with the cost of: Transport and school uniform to ensure attendance to school • Subsidising the celebration of good and improved attendance activities • Support put in place from external agencies if necessary for example Early Help Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations for Audit for Attendance Summer 2023 	
<p>Embedding a Mental Health Strategy for all students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to lengthen morning registration to allow for one to one mentoring • Train a member of SLT to be the Senior Mental Health Lead • Provide CPD for staff on How to support Young People with Mental Health Needs • Implement a programme of activities for PSE/Form time that gives students a toolkit to support their mental health • Embed Five Star Friday for academic and pastoral recognition • Develop extra- curricular offer particularly in the Arts/Creative Subjects • One to one meetings for GCSE students about Post 16 Pathways and Preparation for Mock Exams • Set up a Mental Health Strategy group led by Assistant Head for Personal Development to oversee the mental health initiatives in school • Inclusion staff to mentor particular students for a variety of reasons- well-being, social, friendship • Inclusion Strategy meeting once a fortnight to discuss students of concern and put action plans in place • Provide lunch time support through Inclusion for children who struggle with peer relationships • Provide a Rainbows Bereavement Course 	<p>There is a plethora of research surrounding the benefits and establishment of inclusion in education¹. A study called <i>Inclusion and the standards agenda: negotiating policy pressures in England²</i> in 2006 defines successful inclusion as ‘Schools...hav[ing] strategies for encouraging the presence, participation, and achievement of all learners’. This is now echoed in <i>UNESCO’s ‘Guide to Ensuring Inclusion and Equality in Education’</i> (2017). Various models and factors have been discussed and recent studies (including <i>Dimitrellou 2017³</i> and <i>Farrell 2004⁴</i>) have started to model the features required to enable inclusive education to occur. These studies coupled with ‘<i>School exclusion: a literature review on the continued disproportionate exclusion of certain children⁵</i>’ provide a comprehensive literature review of inclusion and a sound basis of research.</p> <p>From this research a Trust Approach to inclusion has been established which ensures all schools have</p>	1,2,3,4,5

¹ ‘Inclusive education’ means that all children are together in mainstream classrooms for the majority of their day. (Implementing inclusive education, Dr Matthew J. Schuelka University of Birmingham 29 August 2018)

² Mel Ainscow, Tony Booth and Alan Dyson, *School of Education, University of Manchester, Manchester, UK; Canterbury Christ Church University, Canterbury, UK, 2006*

³ Does an inclusive ethos enhance the sense of school belonging and encourage the social relations of young adolescents identified as having social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) and moderate learning difficulties (MLD)?, 2017, UCL

⁴ Farrell, P. (2004). School Psychologists: Making Inclusion a Reality for All. School Psychology International.

⁵ Graham et al, DfE, 2019

<p>In addition to our 'in house' provision, we also engage the services of other professionals to support our work. This has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech and language specialist • Educational Psychologist • School Nurse • CAMH • Aspire • CHUMS • Shine • Reactivate • Other Borough Services such as Early Help and Children Services 	<p>inclusion teams to support implementation of agreed behaviour principles, and who provide bespoke support to children including emotional support, attendance support, early help and family support.</p> <p>We also rely on the findings of the EIF in relation to the effect of early help and intervention in respect of mental health and achievement</p>	
<p>Embedding the Behaviour Support Policy which promotes inclusion and the valuing of each individual, encouraging self-esteem, self-discipline, respect and self-regulation for children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a clear and consistent behaviour policy and approach, which is inclusive and escalatory • Weekly Behaviour Training provided for Assistant Head in charge of Behaviour • Reduction in Pastoral Leads teaching commitment to support student self-regulation and parental engagement with school • Inclusion Behaviour Staff are trained with the Girls on Board Initiative and utilise the strategies during mentoring sessions • Appointment of an additional member of the Inclusion Team who has mentoring skills • Student Services relocated to main building • Expansion of Safeguarding Team and staff trained using National College Training materials • Proportion of Pupil Premium Fund to support short-term alternative provision for a small group of PP students 	<p>Our policy is underpinned by the DFE research on Behaviour and Discipline in Schools.</p> <p>We have also used the research of Tom Bennett who is considered a national expert in this area to develop our Learning Support Policy</p>	1, 2, 3,
<p>Proportion of PP allocation (£10,000) to be reserved to support families with the cost of different activities that will develop the students' cultural capital</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form T-shirts • School trips 	<p>The EEF Toolkit shows that participation in the Arts and Sports can add 2-3 months to students' progress in one year. One of the most notable results is in students improved attitudes and enjoyment of school and gains made in the</p>	1, 2, 3, 6, 9

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Academic Workshops• Access to before and after school clubs• Any other expenditure deemed necessary by the school	relationships between students and teachers	
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Total budgeted cost: £

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 students in the 2022 to 2023 academic year.

- Pupil Premium Students made good progress at GCSE in some subjects: In 2022 attainment 8 overall score was 4.4 in 2023 it was 3.9.
- Grade 4+ English and Maths in 2022 was 61% and in 2023 it was 58%
- One to one support was provided for students in Maths through My Tutor and the in school Maths Tutor and the unvalidated Progress 8 score in Maths for disadvantaged students was 0.0 in 2023 in 2022 it was 0.28
- Laptops/Chrome Books were provided for students to ensure they could complete homework/coursework
- Support for bus passes/taxis and uniform were provided
- Support for trips and extra-curricular activities was provided across all year groups
- Tutor/tutee interviews were conducted regularly across the year during registration time
- EBAAC Numbers have grown: in 2022 14% of students were entered for the EBAAC and in 2023 this had increased to 21.4%
- Numbers in MFL are increasing in 2022 27% pupils studied a language this figure increased to 45% in 2023.
- 16 departments used the PP bid system to apply for funding for resources for Pupil Premium students
- A programme of activities for registration was put in place to promote mental health and well-being
- The reading ages for most of the 21 pupil premium students involved in different reading interventions improved- **see examples below**

Paired Reading Intervention

1. 13 PP students on paired reading programme
2. 77% of PP students doing paired reading intervention improved their reading age

Impact of Switch on Reading

- 8 PP students on switch on reading programme
- 75% of PP students doing switch on reading intervention improved their reading age

Overall the Literacy Interventions have worked very well and students made good progress with their reading ages in Year 7-10. This improvement in Literacy remains a priority for this year as the impact of the pandemic is still felt particularly on Year 7-9 students.

In analysing the dip in attainment for the disadvantaged students poor attendance coupled with some students becoming school refusers accounted for the dip in performance. Improving attendance of disadvantaged students remains a priority for this academic year.

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
MyMaths	My Maths
National Geographic Kids Subscription	National Geographic
Maths Watch	Maths Watch
Maths Tutoring	MyTutor
English Tutoring	MyTutor

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information:

Measure	Details
How did you spend your service pupil premium allocation last academic year?	
What was the impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible students?	

Further information (optional)

Use this space to provide any further information about your pupil premium strategy. For example, about your strategy planning, or other activity that you are implementing to support disadvantaged students, that is not dependent on pupil premium or recovery premium funding.