

St Thomas More RC College: Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2024 to 2025 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.

School overview

| Detail | Data |
|--|--|
| School name: St Thomas More RC College | |
| Number of pupils in school: | 780 |
| Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils: | 25.8% (194 pupils) |
| Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers. | 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027 3 years |
| Date this statement was published | December 2024 |
| Date on which it will be reviewed | December 2025 |
| Statement authorised by | Mr Huw Brophy Headteacher |
| Pupil premium lead | Mr Mark Smith Assistant Headteacher |
| Governor / Trustee lead | Mrs Ross |

Funding overview

| Detail | Amount |
|---|----------|
| Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year | £185,850 |
| Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year | £7,526 |
| Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable) | £ 0 |
| Total budget for this academic year | £193,376 |
| If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year | |

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

What are your ultimate objectives for your disadvantaged pupils?

Our intention is that every pupil at St Thomas More RC College, irrespective of their background, starting points or challenges will achieve the very best outcomes in progress and attainment. Furthermore, we intend to ensure all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, always have access to high quality teaching and this is at the core of our curriculum, teaching and learning strategies and assessments. High quality teaching and learning is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on the needs of our disadvantaged cohort. The attainment and progress of our non-disadvantaged students will be sustained and improved alongside their disadvantaged peers. There will be high expectations for all, with carefully scaffolded steps to open access to everyone. Our continuous professional development programme will support teachers and staff to ensure they have the capacity, knowledge and expertise to support disadvantaged pupils, so they experience success across the curriculum by building knowledge and learning over time through high quality teaching.

All pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, will experience curriculum equity and there is a culture of collective responsibility for disadvantaged pupils across the school. At all times, our disadvantaged pupils are at the forefront of what we do to raise standards, aspirations and attainment at KS3 & 4.

We will continue to develop the whole school ethos and culture of excellence at St Thomas More RC College in relation to behaviour and well-being so all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, thrive in an environment that supports them academically, pastorally and develops the child as a whole. We intend to promote a culture of 'attendance matters' and to continue to build relationships with parents and carers so they are aware why attendance matters and how they can support their child. In addition, we intend to remove any potential barriers to attendance, participation, and inclusion in the full life of our school community.

We will focus on ensuring all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, are taught reading comprehension strategies, as this is an area disadvantaged pupils' need the most support. Furthermore, the teaching of reading strategies is proven to have an impact on closing the attainment gap across the curriculum and key stages. In addition, to ensure the needs of disadvantaged pupils are met, appropriate intervention will be put in place to support disadvantaged pupils across the curriculum, especially in English and Mathematics. Intervention will take place in the classroom through diagnostic assessments, whole class feedback, small group intervention or via an external agency.

Our curriculum will be ambitious, broad, and inclusive to meet the needs of all learners. All pupils, especially the disadvantaged, will have access to a rich careers and pathways curriculum so they are ready for the next stage of their education. Also, all learners will be well-informed about the next steps, options and future pathways: apprenticeships, T-Levels, A-Levels, traineeships and employment.

How does your current pupil premium strategy plan work towards achieving those objectives?

The Pupil Premium Plan is reviewed every term, alongside implementation plans that support teaching and learning, attendance, behaviour and culture, disciplinary literacy, assessment and attendance and these are reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and Pastoral Leads. Furthermore, strategic 'curriculum conversations' take place every term with Curriculum Leaders and Professional Development opportunities are in place that support the Pupil Premium Strategy and St Thomas More RC College implementation plans.

The Pupil Premium Plan is agreed by Governors and the impact of the strategy is discussed by the Pastoral team, Subject Leaders and SLT. Everyone is aware that we have a collective responsibility for implementing the strategy by raising academic attainment through high quality teaching and learning, developing enrichment opportunities, raising aspirations and creating opportunities to develop cultural capital for disadvantaged pupils.

What are the key principles of your strategy plan?

St Thomas More has a strong culture and ethos of excellence, and we intend to further embed these principles into our curriculum and college daily life to ensure all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, aspire to our high expectations of success, our core standards & behaviour and they consistently have high aspirations.

St Thomas More is committed to raising the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils across the curriculum, especially in English and Maths. Also, the high-quality teaching and learning in the classroom and CPD opportunities support the needs of disadvantaged pupils.

Intervention is in place to support disadvantaged pupils across the curriculum, especially in English and Maths and at the point of transition from KS2 to KS3.

At all times, there is a strong focus on our strong Catholic ethos, moral, spiritual and cultural values to develop the whole child and to foster a culture of excellence in every aspect of our daily life.

Challenges

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

| Challenge number | Detail of challenge |
|------------------|--|
| 1 | Diagnostic assessments, discussions with feeder KS2 schools, and observations have identified that disadvantaged pupils have lower reading comprehension and vocabulary levels than non-disadvantaged pupils. |
| 2 | Our attendance data highlights that disadvantaged pupils have lower attendance than their non-disadvantaged peers. |
| 3 | Our assessments, observations and discussions highlight that high ability disadvantaged pupils' attainment is generally lower than that of their peers across the curriculum. Some disadvantaged pupils lack the resilience, confidence and self-regulation skills to monitor their learning. |
| 4 | Our observations, assessments and curriculum conversations have identified that disadvantaged pupils, especially lower attaining pupils, find it challenging to communicate their ideas during class discussions For some disadvantaged pupils, there is an oracy and vocabulary gap, and this is being addressed in small group interventions with low attaining pupils. |
| 5 | Our observations and discussions with pupils have identified a need to develop enrichment opportunities for our pupils to support mental health and well-being. We need to offer them wider enrichment opportunities that enable them to aim high and at the same time, be motivated to succeed academically. |
| 6. | Our observations and discussions with pupils, staff and external agencies has highlighted that this is an area to focus on to raise aspirations and opportunities at Post 16 for all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils. |

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 reading comprehension and fluency skills among most disadvantaged at KS3 and KS4 so pupils can comprehend subject specific texts independently. | Reading comprehension tests demonstrate improved levels of reading comprehension. Improved attainment evident in internal tracking and monitoring. Fluency tests demonstrate low attaining disadvantaged pupils can read more smoothly, with greater expression, volume, phrasing and pace. |
| Improved attendance and punctuality for all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, persistent non- attenders and pupils at risk of non - attendance. | The % of all students who are persistently absent to have reduced and the attendance and lateness of disadvantaged student to have improved. Attendance and punctuality monitored weekly by the Attendance Lead, HOY and Form Tutors. |

| | |
|--|---|
| Improved attainment at KS4 across the curriculum for all disadvantaged pupils, especially in English and Maths. | Pupils eligible for PP to make as much progress as national non-disadvantaged pupils. Pupils identified with low/ high KS2 scores to make as much progress as non-disadvantaged pupils with low/ high KS2 scores. |
| <p>All pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, have access to an Enrichment programme that develops self-esteem, well-being, improves behaviour and develops the child as a whole through the culture, ethos and values of the school.</p> <p>Decrease in social and emotional issues for disadvantaged pupils and all concerns are logged on CURA and acted on. Also, appropriate support, plans and provisions are in place for these pupils.</p> | <p>Pupil voice, parent voice, well-being survey. Behaviour records show a decrease in on calls/ behaviour incidents for disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>Data highlights that more disadvantaged pupils are participating in a wider range of enrichment activities.</p> <p>Improved attendance for disadvantaged pupils.</p> |
| To invest in enhanced post-16 and post-18 careers education and opportunities which lead to positive destinations for all learners. | Minimum NEETS in KS4. The destinations of our disadvantaged cohort to be as aspirational as their non-disadvantaged peers. |

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: £

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| <p><i>Improving literacy across the curriculum and adopting a disciplinary approach as outlined in the EEF Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools guidance.</i></p> <p><i>Scheduled professional development for departments, which will consist of whole school</i></p> | <p>Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for narrowing the transition gap from KS2 to KS3 and beyond.</p> <p>As outlined in the EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit, reading comprehension strategies will enable pupils to comprehend what they read through summarising, graphic organisers, questioning and monitoring their own comprehension (+6 months progress)</p> | 1, 3, 4 |

| | | |
|---|--|---------|
| <p><i>and subject level strategies to develop disciplinary literacy.</i></p> <p><i>Purchase of standardised NRG T Reading tests</i></p> | <p>Standardised reading tests allow the teacher and teaching assistants to gain an insight into the strengths and weaknesses of each pupil to ensure the teaching of reading is scaffolded and modelled in the classroom/ small group interventions.</p> <p>EEF Reading Fluency: focus on echo and choral reading.</p> <p>EEF Reading Comprehension Strategies.</p> <p><i>Closing the Reading Gap, Alex Quigley</i></p> <p><i>EEF Standardised tests/ assessing and monitoring pupils' progress.</i></p> <p><i>ASCL The Forgotten Third Report</i></p> | |
| <p><i>Improving high quality teaching and 'teaching to the top across curriculum/ subject areas in line with recommendations in the EEF Toolkit guidance.</i></p> <p><i>This will involve ongoing teacher training and support.</i></p> | <p>Teaching a range of strategies to support high quality teaching in all subjects and to adopt a '<i>teaching to the top</i>' approach' to support all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, in their learning through modelling, questioning and feedback.</p> <p><i>The National College Guidance on Teaching and Learning strategies.</i></p> <p><i>Rosenshine's Principles on Modelling Teaching Walk Thrus on modelling.</i></p> | 1,3,4 |
| <p><i>Oracy and vocabulary development</i></p> | <p>Acquiring vocabulary and oracy skills is key to narrow the gap for all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>As outlined in the EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit, comprehension and reading skills benefit from explicit discussion, structured high-quality talk in the classroom and this supports pupils use of vocabulary, articulation of ideas and spoken expression.</p> <p>EEF Toolkit Oral Language Interventions +6 months.</p> <p>Verbal Feedback +7 months.</p> <p>Voice 21 Programme</p> <p>High-quality structured talk to develop reading comprehension:</p> | 1, 3, 4 |

| | | |
|--|---|---------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reciprocal reading • Voice 21 talk tactics. • Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction on questioning, • Developing reading fluency using Raskinski's fluency scales and EEF recommendations. | |
| <i>Raising Attainment across the curriculum, especially in English and Maths</i> | <p>Reducing the class sizes in English and Maths at KS4 to support all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils so they have access to high quality teaching and 'live' feedback.</p> <p>EEF Toolkit: Reducing class sizes +2 months</p> <p>EEF Toolkit: Verbal Feedback +7 months</p> | 1, 3, 4 |

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

Budgeted cost: £

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|--|--|-------------------------------|
| <p><i>A targeted 4 strand Literacy Programme that focuses on the development and mastery of reading skills to help disadvantaged pupils comprehend more complex texts and address vocabulary gaps.</i></p> <p><i>Scheduled Professional Development for Teaching Assistants on using reading strategies, especially reading fluency, to support comprehension.</i></p> | <p>The following reading comprehension strategies will be delivered and embedded in small intervention groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics • <i>Reading Fluency</i> • Reciprocal reading/ comprehension • Vocabulary <p>Reading strategies have a positive impact on developing pupils' confidence, comprehension and understanding of a text and enable disadvantaged pupils to access a wider range of texts independently.</p> <p><i>Reading comprehension strategies Toolkit Strand EEF +6 months</i></p> | 1, 3, 4 |

| | | |
|---|--|---------|
| | <p><i>EEF Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools guidance.</i></p> <p><i>Making the best use of teaching assistants EEF guidance.</i></p> <p><i>EEF Small group tuition +4 months</i></p> | |
| <p><i>A targeted Mathematics programme using White Rose Maths and SPARX Maths that focuses on the development and mastery of Mathematical skills to support disadvantaged pupils, especially SEND Pupil Premium pupils.</i></p> | <p>The following reading Mathematical strategies will be delivered and embedded in small intervention groups;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manipulative and representation • Strategies for solving problems • Develop motivation and independence • 4 areas of number • Mathematical vocabulary • Areas/ number <p>EEF Improving Mathematics at KS2 and 3. EEF Small group tuition +4 months</p> | 1, 3, 5 |
| <p><i>A focused, robust and engaging Careers Programme that inspires and informs pupils about the following: Post 16 choices, Pathways, careers in different sectors ranging from academic careers related to degrees, apprenticeships., T-Levels and traineeship programmes.</i></p> | <p>Working with external agencies to provide pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils to know the different Pathways at Post 16.</p> <p>Progression rates to Sixth Form or another provider are high for all, especially disadvantaged pupil. By giving pupils, the opportunity to raise aspirations and visit higher education institutions, they will be inspired to think about the higher opportunities for their future.</p> <p>GM Higher GMACS Ask Apprenticeships Post 16 Providers – Feeder Colleges The University of Oxford</p> | 6 |

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

Budgeted cost: £

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---|--|-------------------------------|
| <p><i>Development and embedding enrichment opportunities for all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, to create a culture and ethos of excellence to promote positive behaviour and well-being.</i></p> <p><i>Scheduled Professional Development opportunities for the Enrichment Coordinator and completion of the NPQLBC</i></p> <p><i>Scheduled Professional Development for staff on their role within the development of a whole school ethos and culture of excellence in relation to behaviour and well-being.</i></p> | <p>“The way pupils behave in school is strongly correlated with their outcomes.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils achieve more academically and socially. • Time is reclaimed for better and more learning. • Staff satisfaction improves, retention is higher, recruitment is less problematic.” • Rewards and sanctions data will show no disparity between the data of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. • Review of the Behaviour Policy <p><i>Creating a Culture: How School Leaders can Optimise Behaviour by Tom Bennett</i></p> <p><i>EEF Improving Behaviour in Schools</i></p> <p><i>EEF Toolkit Behaviour Interventions +4 months</i></p> | <p>2, 3, 5</p> |
| <p><i>Developing and embedding the exemplary practice set out in the DFE Working Together to Improve Attendance document to decrease attendance concerns.</i></p> | <p>The DFE guidance sets out the key principles to improving attendance in schools and emphasis is placed on the building of positive relationships and communication with parents/ carers to ensure they support attendance and that ‘Attendance Matters and You can Help.’</p> <p>PP progress will increase with higher attendance and a weekly focus on attendance and communication with parents/ carers will address this.</p> <p><i>EEF document Working with Parents to Support Children’s Learning +4 months.</i></p> <p><i>OFSTED Blogs Attendance</i></p> <p><i>DFE Working Together to Improve Attendance.</i></p> | <p>2, 3</p> |

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 pupils in the 2023 to 2024 academic year.

We have analysed the performance data of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the 2023/2024 academic year using key stage 4 performance data and our own internal assessments.

For 2024 GCSE Leavers, the Progress 8 score for our disadvantaged pupils was +0.04 and it was 0.16 for England non-disadvantaged pupils. The local authority P8 score for non-disadvantaged pupils was +0.04.. This means that STM disadvantaged leavers in 2024 made the same progress as non-disadvantaged in the local authority.

This year, the gap for disadvantaged pupils has slightly widened and will continue to be a focus, assuming P8 scores are published for the 2027 cohort (2025 and 2026 cohorts have no KS2 prior attainment and as a result will not have any P8 scores).

The attendance for this group was 88.8%, which was 4.3% below their non-disadvantaged peers. It should be noted that some of the disadvantaged pupils in this cohort had issues with their mental-health, and well-being, which was addressed with behaviour/ attendance support plans and interventions with external agencies. A few disadvantaged pupils were classed as 'severely absent' and 'persistently absent', which had an impact on some of these pupils' accessing interventions and strategies that had been implemented to support their attainment.

Mid ability (the largest group of disadvantaged pupils) performed exceptionally well and the Progress 8 score for this group of pupils was 0.29. During the year, whole school CPD focused on the collective responsibility of all staff to support disadvantaged pupils at a curriculum and pastoral level. Furthermore, CPD focused on the research by Marc Rowland on addressing 'need' not labels, which supported the teaching and learning focus on 'teaching to the top' and high-quality oracy in the classroom.

A mixture of online tutoring and in school led tutoring in English and Maths was in place for Year 10 and 11 disadvantaged pupils and the in-school tuition and school led tuition proved beneficial for the pupils that were targeted.

In addition, our internal monitoring of parents' evenings and attendance data highlights that some of our disadvantaged families are the hardest to reach, even with proactive strategies including communication home, meetings and priority appointments. This

will continue to be a focus for 2024-2025 and it will form part of the attendance implementation plan.

Data from student destinations illustrated that our Year 11 NEET figures (2023-2024) were one of the lowest in the LEA and only pupil 1 disadvantaged pupil was NEET.

Moving forward, we know that our work on attendance needs to be a continued focus and further strengthened so disadvantaged pupils do not miss vital interventions or curriculum time. Our teaching and learning strategies will be focusing on modelling, questioning, feedback and literacy to support all disadvantaged pupils.

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 |
|-----------------------------|--|
| National Tutoring Programme | Cambridge Tutoring Monarch Tutoring |