

St Thomas More RC College: Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2025 to 2026 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:	798
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils:	29.7% (237 pupils)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers.	2024, 2025, 2026, 2027 3 years
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	December 2026
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	£202,481
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£5,376
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year	£207,857

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At St Thomas More RC College, our intent is to provide an ambitious, and highly inclusive education that enables every pupil, irrespective of their background or barriers to learning, to achieve exceptional progress and attainment.

We believe that the best advantage that we can provide for a Disadvantaged pupil is to embed them in a culture of high expectations of learning, behaviour and attendance. It is our intent to foster a such a culture throughout St Thomas More.

We aim to remove barriers to learning by maintaining high expectations across all subjects. By utilising carefully structured, scaffolded learning steps, we will allow all learners, particularly our disadvantaged cohort, to access and master the full breadth of our curriculum.

To achieve this, we aim to build staff pedagogical expertise through a targeted professional development programme. Our goal is to ensure teachers sequence learning with precision, allowing pupils to systematically build, connect, and retain long-term knowledge over time.

We intend to close the attainment gap by embedding reading comprehension and oracy strategies, recognising disciplinary literacy as the primary driver for curriculum access.

This strategy will be reinforced by a robust, responsive model of targeted intervention in English and Mathematics, driven by diagnostic assessments and small-group provision.

Our intent is to foster a culture where 'attendance matters' by working in collaborative partnership with parents and carers to address the root causes of absence.

We strive to offer a rich program of enrichment activities that enable pupils to develop social skills and emotional wellbeing.

Finally, we commit to ensuring that all pupils, especially the most vulnerable, receive comprehensive careers and pathways guidance, leaving them well-informed, highly aspirational, and fully prepared for their next stage of education or employment.

Challenge number	Detail of challenge / focus
1	<p>Examination data, assessments, observations and discussions indicate that disadvantaged pupils' performance is generally lower than that of their peers across the curriculum. This is true for A8, P8 (where available), 4+ and 5+ in English and Maths.</p> <p>Our ambitions aim is to close the gap between our Disadvantaged pupils and 'other' pupils nationally.</p>
2	<p>Diagnostic assessments, discussions with feeder KS2 schools, and observations have identified that disadvantaged pupils have lower reading comprehension levels than non-disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>Our focus will be on improving and reading comprehension for these pupils.</p>
3	<p>Our observations, assessments and curriculum conversations have identified that disadvantaged pupils, especially lower attaining pupils, have lower oracy levels and find it challenging to communicate their ideas during class discussions</p> <p>We aim to address this oracy and vocabulary in small group interventions with low attaining pupils. Alongside this we will run a whole-school oracy program.</p>
4	<p>Attendance data highlights that disadvantaged pupils have lower attendance than their non-disadvantaged peers.</p> <p>Our ambitious aim is to close the gap between the attendance of our Disadvantaged pupils and 'other' pupils nationally</p>
5	<p>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.</p>
6	<p>Our observations and discussions with pupils, staff and external agencies has highlighted that our disadvantaged pupils can have lower aspirations for themselves than their non-disadvantaged peers. Our focus will be to raise awareness, aspirations and opportunities at Post 16 for our disadvantaged pupils.</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 at KS4 across the curriculum for all disadvantaged pupils, especially in English and Maths.	Pupils eligible for PP to make similar progress as national non-disadvantaged pupils.
Improved reading comprehension and fluency skills among most disadvantaged at KS3 and KS4 so pupils can comprehend subject specific texts independently.	<p>Reading comprehension tests demonstrate improved levels of reading comprehension.</p> <p>Improved attainment evident in internal tracking and monitoring.</p> <p>Fluency tests demonstrate low attaining disadvantaged pupils can read more smoothly, with greater expression, volume, phrasing and pace.</p>
To provide opportunities for structured talk and to develop confidence, vocabulary and fluency, with the associated benefits to literacy overall.	<p>Evidence of structured talk in lessons</p> <p>Increased confidence in communicating and disciplinary oracy.</p>
Improved attendance and punctuality for all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, persistent non-attenders and pupils at risk of severe absence.	<p>The % of all students who are persistently absent to have reduced and the attendance and lateness of disadvantaged student to have improved.</p> <p>Attendance and punctuality monitored weekly by the Attendance Lead, HOY and Form Tutors.</p>
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>Pupil voice, parent voice, well-being survey.</p> <p>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

Teaching	Budgeted cost: £120 000	
Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>Developing our high-quality teaching. Improving teacher effectiveness across the curriculum by training and embedding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routines • Lesson Cycle of: Retrieval; Connect; Explicit instruction, Guided practice, • Independent practice, Review • Strategic seating • Circulating with purpose • Checking for understanding <p>CPD to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole school CPD • Subject specific curriculum time • Teacher NCT to support planning <p>Providing homework tasks which focus on retrieval and embedding learning: Sparx Maths, Sparx Reader, Sparx Science</p>	<p>EEF Guide to Pupil premium Barak Rosenshine EEF 'High-quality teaching' EEF Behaviour and routine Sparx impact</p>	1, 4, 5, 6
<p>Improving literacy across the curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Oracy • Disciplinary vocabulary <p>Adopting a disciplinary approach as outlined in the EEF Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools guidance.</p> <p>Scheduled professional development for departments, which will consist of whole school and subject level strategies to develop disciplinary literacy and oracy.</p> <p>Purchase and use of standardised NRG T Reading tests</p> <p>Purchase, roll-out and support Sparx Reader throughout KS3</p>	<p>EEF Improving Literacy in secondary Schools EEF Oracy Language interventions</p>	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
<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 Feedback EEF Reducing class sizes</p>	1, 2, 4, 6
<p>Supporting a purposeful learning environment across the school through the planning, implementation and review of our Behaviour policy.</p> <p>Appointment of a Pastoral Support Manager</p>	<p>EEF Behaviour interventions EEF Improving consistency</p>	1, 4, 5, 6

Targeted academic support	Budgeted cost: £58 000	
Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>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.</p> <p>Scheduled Professional Development for Teaching Assistants on using reading strategies, especially reading fluency, to support comprehension.</p> <p>Small group interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics • Reading Fluency • Reciprocal reading/ comprehension • Vocabulary <p>Includes pre-teaching and consolidation to support engagement and progress in English lessons</p>	<p>EEF Reading comprehension strategies</p> <p>EEF Small group tuition</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 6</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>Includes pre-teaching and consolidation to support engagement and progress in Maths lessons</p>	<p>EEF Small group tuition</p>	<p>1, 6</p>
<p>Provision of Sparks Maths, English and Science homework support.</p>	<p>EEF Impact of Homework</p>	<p>1, 2, 6</p>

Wider strategies	Budgeted cost: £30 000	
Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>EEF Behaviour and interventions</p> <p>EEF Enrichment and engagement</p>	1, 5
<p>Developing and embedding the exemplary practice set out in the DFE Working Together to Improve Attendance document to decrease attendance concerns.</p>	<p>EEF Evidence on improving attendance for disadvantaged pupils</p> <p>EEF Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning</p> <p>DFE Working Together to Improve Attendance.</p>	1, 5
<p>Year 9 disadvantaged pupils provided targeted Careers appointments.</p> <p>All pupils are provided a focused, robust and engaging Careers Programme that inspires and informs.</p>	<p>EEF Impact of careers education</p>	4, 6

Total budgeted cost: £208 000

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 academic year.

We have analysed the performance data of our school's disadvantaged pupils during the 2024/2025 academic year using key stage 4 performance data and our own internal assessments.

Attainment of the Disadvantaged pupils is below average for Disadvantaged pupils Nationally, in the categories: English % 5+, Lang % 5+, Hum % 4+.

The attendance for this group was 88.6%, which was 5.2% 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.

It should be noted that this cohort included a number of Disadvantaged pupils who had joined us in year 11 through a Schools Attendance Order or through Fair Access.

For 2025 GCSE Leavers, the Progress 8 score for pupils is unavailable, due to a lack of KS2 data (Covid year). Due to this lack of KS2 data it is not possible to demonstrate or measure the progress made by pupils. Internal tracking suggests that this cohort of pupils were on average, a lower ability than previous years and as a result there was a drop in 5+ and 4+ in Maths and English grades, relative to past performance and National Non-Disadvantaged. Internal assessment data from the next cohort (2025-26) who are also a Covid year, suggest an upturn in these grades. The GCSE outcomes of our Disadvantaged pupils remain a high priority, including their overall attainment.

Attainment of the Disadvantaged pupils is close to average for Disadvantaged pupils Nationally, in the categories: Overall A8, E&M% 4+, E&M% 5+, Eng A8, Eng % 4+, Maths A8, Maths % 5+, Science % 4+, Science % 5+, Lang % 4+, Hum % 5+, EBacc A8, Open A8.

School led tutoring in English and Maths was in place for Year 10 and 11 disadvantaged pupils along with Literacy and numeracy intervention groups in KS3. These 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.

Our Year 11 NEET figures (2024-2025) for Disadvantaged pupils indicate that this is an area of priority for us and will remain a focus for 2025-26

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. Learning walks and lesson tours indicate that our focus on high quality teaching is bearing fruit. Classes are quiet and focused. Pupils are engaged in their learning. This is having a positive effect in providing an improving environment for our Disadvantaged learners.

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
Tutoring in Maths and English, face to face and online for PP+ pupils	Monarch Education Affinity Tutors