



## Pupil Premium Strategy Review

June 2025

At St. Mary's, we are deeply committed to ensuring that every child, regardless of background, has access to a high-quality education that enables them to thrive academically, socially, and personally. Our strategic use of Pupil Premium funding is carefully designed to remove barriers to learning, close attainment gaps, and provide meaningful opportunities that support the development of disadvantaged pupils. Through a robust focus on **high-quality teaching, targeted academic support and wider enrichment initiatives**, we ensure that all children have the tools and experiences necessary to reach their full potential.

### Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Recognising that **the greatest driver of pupil success is exceptional teaching**, we continue to invest in the professional development of our staff to ensure the highest standards of education. We believe that teachers are lifelong learners, and through our **highly structured CPD programme**, we provide tailored training that directly impacts classroom practice. This year, we have refined our **in-house coaching model**, ensuring that teachers benefit from personalised, needs-driven support. This **individualised CPD approach** moves beyond traditional one-size-fits-all training, allowing staff to develop in a way that maximises their strengths and supports areas for improvement. The group most benefitting from this are our ECTs. Our **Early Career Teacher (ECT) programme** continues to build on the strong foundation established last year, ensuring that new teachers receive structured mentorship and support. By embedding high-quality teaching practices from the outset, we ensure that our newest educators are well-equipped to deliver **outstanding, evidence-based instruction**. This year, our 3 ECT 2s have passed the Teachers' Standards - one is also now completing the NPQML - a specialist NPQ on middle leading.

Furthermore, our **Accelerated Leadership programme** has been instrumental in developing emerging leaders within the school. This year they have focused on a range of school events to enhance the offer for pupils e.g. Seeds of Change to raise funds for refugees, writing planning for key areas of the curriculum, working across schools to coordinate events and developing the children's experience in the playground.

We remain committed to **teacher retention**, recognising the importance of stability and consistency in pupils' educational experiences. Our focus on **staff well-being, manageable workload, and professional growth opportunities** ensures that we attract and retain skilled educators who are dedicated to making a difference in the lives of all pupils, including those eligible for Pupil Premium.

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

To close learning gaps and accelerate progress, we have implemented a range of **structured interventions and tutoring programmes** that provide additional, focused support to disadvantaged pupils. Our interventions are **precisely targeted**, using rigorous assessment data to ensure that pupils receive the most appropriate support at the right time. These initiatives include the **Year 6 Achievement School, morning and afternoon booster sessions, dedicated phonics sessions before school and an Easter School**—all designed to provide **high-impact learning opportunities** outside of the regular school day.

These interventions, providing additional targeted support have proven beneficial, leading to high outcomes. Again, this year the school has seen results for **phonics** being high with **98%** passing the phonics test in Year 1 - higher than the national average. Part of this ongoing success, alongside high-quality phonics teaching, is our phonics school. The before school provision, which builds confidence, understanding and progress in phonics and is accessible for those entitled to pupil premium, led to 5 out of 6 pupils (83%) entitled to pupil premium passing the phonics test (national 2024 being 68% and in line with non-disadvantaged national at 83%).

Our **experienced teachers and leaders** have overseen these interventions, ensuring that they are aligned with **quality-first teaching principles** and **adaptive, evidence-based strategies**. Additional training has been provided to teachers and support staff to ensure that **small-group instruction is highly effective**, with a clear focus on addressing misconceptions, reinforcing key concepts, and developing pupils' confidence as independent learners. **Adaptive Teaching** has been a further focus for the second half of this year and will continue moving forwards - by focusing on misconceptions and correcting these quickly and effectively, pupils will make accelerated progress. In addition, our **Year 6 pupils have benefited from an improved teacher:pupil ratio**, utilising one of our experienced teachers to give tailored teaching during the year.

By maintaining **small pupil-teacher ratios** in intervention settings, we create an environment where pupils receive **individualised feedback and tailored instruction**. The strategic repetition of key learning objectives ensures that **pupils can consolidate their understanding**, apply their knowledge in a range of contexts, and demonstrate measurable progress in both classwork and formal assessments. Our rigorous **monitoring and assessment cycle** ensures that interventions are regularly evaluated and adjusted to maximise their effectiveness, with oversight from the **Headteacher and SENCo** to ensure that provision remains responsive to pupils' evolving needs.

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

In addition to academic support, we place significant emphasis on **broadening pupils' experiences, fostering well-being, and removing financial barriers to enrichment activities**. We are committed to ensuring that disadvantaged pupils have access to the same **high-quality cultural, sporting, and extracurricular opportunities** as their peers.

To support **equitable access to enrichment**, we have provided **partial or full funding** for Pupil Premium pupils to attend school trips and extracurricular activities. Pupils have participated in a diverse range of experiences, including visits to the **Postal Museum, London Eye, a London**

**riverboat cruise, Legoland, a falconry show, mud runs, farm and farm visit alongside visitors providing drama and dance workshops**, all of which have helped **develop their cultural capital and foster a love of learning beyond the classroom**. A trip to **Colchester Zoo** for all disadvantaged pupils is also part of the experience programme this year.

Our **after-school provision has been carefully expanded** to cater to a wide range of interests and abilities. Pupil Premium children have been given priority access to clubs, ensuring they can participate in activities such as **coding, art, pottery, photography, a range of sports, drama and robotics**. Additionally, this year we have introduced a strong **arts-based enrichment programme**, including **street dance, ballet, and musical theatre sessions** delivered in partnership with the **Select School of Dance**. This initiative not only promotes physical well-being but also **encourages creativity, confidence, and self-expression**—key skills that benefit children academically and personally.

Recognising the importance of **inclusion and financial support**, we have ensured that all **Year 6 pupils, regardless of economic background, can participate in the residential trip**, removing financial barriers that could otherwise prevent full engagement. Additionally, events such as **Seeds of Change and Courageous Advocacy projects** have been fully funded, allowing pupils to take part in **charitable and community-focused initiatives** that build social responsibility and a strong moral compass.

Providing a wider curriculum, disadvantaged pupils in Year 5 have been provided the opportunity to take part in a range of high quality **STEM programmes** such as F1 in Schools, in which they reached the national finals and received an award along with a wider programme of GreenPower Karting in which they worked with a school leader to build two electric karts. Year 6 experienced the **West End musical 'Lion King'**, further developing their cultural capital and appreciation of the arts.

In parallel with enrichment, we continue to **prioritise attendance and well-being**. Senior leaders closely **monitor attendance patterns**, identifying and addressing barriers that may impact school engagement. We work proactively with families to **offer tailored support and intervention strategies**, ensuring that all children attend school regularly and benefit from a structured, supportive learning environment.

### **A Commitment to Excellence and Continuous Improvement**

At St. Mary's, we take a **holistic and evidence-based approach** to raising attainment for disadvantaged pupils. Our commitment to **high-quality teaching, personalised academic support, and meaningful enrichment experiences** ensures that every child is given the opportunity to succeed.

Through **continuous data analysis, rigorous intervention monitoring, and strategic leadership oversight**, we remain adaptive to the evolving needs of our pupils. The impact of our **Pupil Premium strategy is regularly evaluated**, ensuring that funding is used **efficiently and effectively to maximise pupil progress and well-being**.

By **removing barriers, raising aspirations, and nurturing a love of learning**, we empower our disadvantaged pupils to **thrive academically, socially, and emotionally**, equipping them with the skills, confidence, and experiences needed for future success.