

Pupil premium strategy statement – St Bede’s Catholic Voluntary Academy 2025-26

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	695
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	29.8%
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)	3 years
Date this statement was published	25 th November
Date on which it will be reviewed	April 2026
Statement authorised by	Ryan Hibbard
Pupil premium lead	Angela Karlsberg
Governor / Trustee lead	Jackie Kelly

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£ 226,330
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£ 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>	£ 226,330

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At St Bede's Catholic Voluntary Academy, we are committed to ensuring that every pupil, regardless of background or circumstance, has the opportunity to flourish and fulfil their God-given potential. Guided by our Catholic mission, we recognise that every child is made in the image of God and we strive to act with compassion, justice, and hope. We believe that disadvantage must never be a barrier to high aspiration, academic success, or full participation in the life of our community.

Inspired by our faith, we are dedicated to providing a broad and balanced education in which every pupil can experience success and discover their unique gifts. Our knowledge-rich curriculum enables students to deepen their understanding of core subjects while engaging meaningfully with wider subject areas such as Music, Drama, ICT, Art, and Technology. Through this, pupils are encouraged to develop curiosity, creativity, and confidence, growing as well-rounded young people ready to contribute positively to society.

Our intention is to use Pupil Premium funding strategically and effectively to raise the attainment and personal development of disadvantaged pupils so that they achieve as well as their peers. This forms a vital part of our mission to build an inclusive Catholic community where every child is valued, supported, and encouraged to flourish in the light of Christ.

We understand that improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils is not about doing more of the same; it is about ensuring that high-quality teaching, a well-sequenced and ambitious curriculum, and a culture of belonging are experienced by every pupil, every day. We are committed to evidence-informed practice, drawing on national research alongside our deep understanding of our pupils' individual needs.

We identify barriers to learning through careful analysis of academic, attendance, and pastoral data, and continually evaluate and adapt our provision to ensure that funding has a measurable impact. We recognise the importance of supporting families to engage fully in their children's education. This includes helping disadvantaged pupils to develop positive attendance habits and high aspirations for their future. In addition, we believe that clear routines and consistent expectations are vital to success, and so Pupil Premium funding is used to promote positive behaviour, structure, and wellbeing that enable pupils to thrive both academically and personally.

Our goal is not only to close attainment gaps but to nurture the whole child academically, spiritually, socially, and emotionally. We want every pupil, regardless of starting point, to develop confidence, curiosity, and compassion, leaving St Bede's ready to make a positive difference in the world.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<u>Impact of lower attainment in English and Maths on entry to Year 7</u> Analysis of KS2 outcomes shows a consistent trend of lower attainment among disadvantaged pupils compared with their peers. This means that the essential knowledge and skills that support learning across the curriculum are often less secure, which can affect confidence and progress as pupils move through the school. In 2024, 56% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard in reading, compared to 81% of non-disadvantaged pupils. This pattern continued in 2025, when 60% of disadvantaged pupils met the expected standard in reading (compared to 84% of non-disadvantaged) and 56% achieved the standard in mathematics (compared to 88% of non-disadvantaged pupils). These outcomes reflect a persistent attainment gap evident across cohorts over time.
2	<u>Impact of lower reading ages on entry</u> KS2 data shows a gap of approximately 25% between disadvantaged pupils and their peers in the proportion meeting the expected standard in reading. This pattern continues upon entry to St Bede's, where STAR Reading assessments indicate that disadvantaged pupils typically demonstrate lower levels of reading comprehension than their peers. In 2025, 31% of disadvantaged pupils had a reading age two or more years below their chronological age, compared with 15% of non-disadvantaged pupils.
3	<u>Impact of lower Attendance and Punctuality to school and lessons.</u> Disadvantaged pupils often face additional barriers that can impact their ability to attend school regularly and arrive on time. Factors such as family circumstances, transport issues, and reduced access to consistent routines can contribute to lower attendance and increased lateness compared to their peers. Our school data shows that pupils eligible for Pupil Premium (PP) have a higher rate of absence and late arrivals than non-PP students. Persistent absence among disadvantaged pupils remains a significant concern, and patterns of lateness can affect learning time and engagement. This ongoing gap highlights the need for targeted interventions to improve attendance and punctuality for PP students. Whilst overall attendance shows an upward trend, the attendance rate for disadvantaged pupils in the last academic year was 90.7% (up from 87.85% in 2023/24). However, this remains below the figure for all students, which was 93.6% (up from 90.7% in 2023/24). The gap is even more pronounced in persistent absence: although significant

	improvements have been made, the rate for disadvantaged pupils was 45.0% in 2022/23, compared to 29.8% in 2024/25.
4	<u>Impact of behaviour and attitudes to learning and associated routines</u> Disadvantaged pupils often experience fewer routines and structures outside of school and may face greater daily challenges than their peers. These circumstances can make it harder for them to meet the school's behaviour expectations, sometimes leading to resistance and negative behaviours. Such behaviours may also present as organisational difficulties or be linked to Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. Our internal data shows that disadvantaged pupils are disproportionately represented in behaviour incidents compared to other students. This ongoing disparity highlights the need for targeted strategies to improve behaviour outcomes and reduce exclusions for disadvantaged pupils.
5	<u>Access to enrichment and wider school engagement</u> Disadvantaged pupils often face financial barriers that limit their ability to participate in educational visits and enrichment activities. These experiences are essential for building cultural capital, raising aspirations, and supporting engagement, yet increased costs for trips and visits have a disproportionate impact on families in areas of high deprivation. The school is in the most deprived quintile nationally and within an area of well above average deprivation, meaning many families are under significant financial strain. Rising living costs and food inflation have further reduced disposable income, making it difficult for disadvantaged pupils to access the same opportunities as their peers. Students eligible for Free School Meals receive an allowance of £2.60; however, some use part of this allocation for breakfast or break-time snacks, leaving insufficient funds for a full lunch. This can negatively affect concentration, behaviour, and overall progress. Combined with limited access to enrichment opportunities, these challenges risk widening gaps in attainment and wellbeing for disadvantaged pupils. Limited aspirations and exposure to pathways beyond the local community.

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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils across the curriculum by the end of KS4, with a particular focus on increasing the proportion achieving grades 9–4 and 9–5 in both English and Maths.	Disadvantaged pupils will achieve stronger outcomes in English and Mathematics, which may lead to the narrowing of the gap and progressing towards FFT20 benchmarks for grades 9–4 and 9–5.
The aim is to improve reading ages and reading comprehension in cohorts of disadvantaged students who have been identified as needing extra support.	• The gap between a pupils' reading ages and their chronological ages is reduced. • Disadvantaged students show increased participation in borrowing books from the library and demonstrate greater engagement in reading for pleasure. • Targeted students participating in the Ruth Miskin programme make measurable progress. • Targeted students participating in the Reading Intervention programme make measurable progress. • At KS4, attainment of disadvantaged students improves through a greater proportion of students achieving grades 9–4 and 9–5 in literacy-based subjects, particularly English Language and English Literature.
To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, with a specific focus on disadvantaged pupils and those who are persistent absentees.	• Attendance of disadvantaged pupils meets or exceeds the national average. • Year-on-year reduction in persistent absence among disadvantaged pupils, with the aim of closing the gap to the national average.
To promote and maintain improved wellbeing for all pupils, with particular attention to those who are disadvantaged. To improve outcomes for Pupil Premium students, the academy is committed to strengthening its provision for students with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. We recognise that a significant number of students in receipt of Pupil Premium funding require targeted emotional and therapeutic support to ensure they are able to engage fully with learning and make expected progress.	• Positive trends in wellbeing feedback from pupil surveys, as well as pupil voice panels. • More timely access to internal wellbeing support and improved referral pathways. • Increased access to external specialist services for pupils requiring additional support, particularly those who are disadvantaged.
To achieve and sustain improved behaviour for all pupils, both inside and	• A reduction in the number of recorded behaviour incidents, partic-

outside of the classroom, including those who are disadvantaged.	ularly among disadvantaged pupils, resulting in fewer incidents relative to their non-disadvantaged peers. • A reduction in the proportion of disadvantaged pupils receiving fixed-term suspensions/exclusions, narrowing the gap with their peers. • A decrease in repeat behavioural incidents for disadvantaged pupils, demonstrating that interventions lead to sustained improvements. • An increased proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving positive award points through the <i>Be Like Bede</i> system. • Increased attendance at reward events, with disadvantaged pupils making greater positive contributions to the school community.
Increased engagement of disadvantaged pupils in enrichment opportunities, including extracurricular activities and educational visits.	• Positive engagement from pupils in the school community, evidenced through responses to pupil voice activities such as questionnaires and surveys. • Sustained access to school trips and extracurricular activities for disadvantaged pupils, ensuring they are not prevented from participating due to financial barriers. • Disadvantaged pupils who wish to participate in music peripatetic lessons can do so. • Increase in disadvantaged pupils applying for and accessing college sixth forms / apprenticeships. • Track participation in careers events.

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium funding **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £ 58,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
- Embed the White Rose Maths scheme across KS3 to ensure strong progression from KS2, reduce knowledge gaps and secure key mathematical concepts for disadvantaged learners. - Implement SPARX Maths across KS3 and KS4 for pupils to strengthen fluency, retrieval and independent practice. Weekly monitoring by Maths team. - Use Tassomai for Year 11 pupils to support structured retrieval practice across subjects, particularly science content for GCSE. - Use Educake in English for retrieval practice, gap identification and targeted independent revision tasks. Ensures disadvantaged pupils receive structured revision support. - Whole-school focus on disciplinary literacy and explicit vocabulary instruction across subjects, including Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary and sentence starters. - Whole-school CPD programme focused on high challenge, scaffolding, and inclusive teaching for disadvantaged pupils. Department CPD time used to share effective strategies for PP pupils.	EEF (2022) Improving Mathematics in KS2 & 3; DfE (2021) KS3 Mathematics Guidance. Structured, carefully sequenced curricula improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils by reducing cognitive overload and enabling conceptual fluency. EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit (2024): Individualised Instruction shows strong impact when digital platforms provide adaptive feedback and targeted practice. DEF (2021) Evidence on digital technology and retrieval practice shows improved long-term learning where used alongside high-quality instruction. EEF (2019) Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools: Retrieval practice and frequent low-stakes testing support long-term retention. EEF (2023) Disciplinary Literacy; strong evidence that teaching vocabulary and oracy supports disadvantaged pupils' access to the curriculum. EEF (2021) High Quality Teaching – the biggest lever for improving disadvantaged outcomes.	1, 2 and 4
A whole-school focus on students reading for pleasure, with events	EEF (2025): Reading Comprehension Strategies	1 and 2

taking place throughout the year in response to the National Literacy Trust timeline. - Continued investment in the school library, including the employment of a full-time librarian. - Library-based reading lessons for all pupils in Years 7,8, and 9 who are in the lowest two or three sets within each year group. - Employment of a primary-trained teacher to strength reading and writing skills for the lower attaining pupils. - Continued use of Accelerator Reader to monitor the pupils' reading progress on a termly basis. - Explicit teaching of reading skills to Accelerator Reader groups. - Study United reading programme delivered for targeted students.	– structured approaches improve outcomes significantly for disadvantaged pupils. EEF (2021) Small Group Tuition – +4 months progress evidence when structured and intensive. EEF: Peer tutoring and mentoring have positive social and academic impact for disadvantaged pupils.	
---	---	--

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

Budgeted cost: £ 74,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
1:1 and small group reading tuition delivered by a primary-trained teacher, supported by librarian and trained reading mentors for identified disadvantaged pupils. - Delivery of Ruth Miskin phonics-based interventions for targeted pupils with significant decoding needs. - Implement specialist Ruth Miskin SEN interventions for pupils with SEND who are also disadvantaged. - Peer reading mentoring programme (trained KS4 pupils supporting KS3 PP pupils).	EEF (2021) Small Group Tuition; EEF (2019) Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools. Evidence shows targeted small group reading interventions can close gaps. EEF Teaching & Learning Toolkit (2023): Phonics – moderate/high impact particularly for lower-attaining readers.	2

	EEF (2023): Structured phonics and multi-sensory approaches support learners with additional needs. EEF: Peer tutoring and mentoring have positive social and academic impact for disadvantaged pupils.	
--	--	--

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

Budgeted cost: £ 93,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
- Attendance Officer provides daily monitoring and communication with Heads of Year and SLT regarding disadvantaged pupil attendance. Persistent absence tracked using DfE attendance banding. - Attendance trackers are updated weekly, clearly highlighting disadvantaged students so that patterns in their attendance can be easily identified. - The Attendance Officer uses the DfE banding groups to prioritise disadvantaged pupils for early support. - Every two weeks, the Head of Year shares the list of students in the DfE 95–90% banding group with the Year 11 tutors. This ensures tutors know which students—prioritising disadvantaged pupils—should receive the first layer of intervention.	Department for Education. <i>“Working together to improve school attendance: statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities.”</i> London: Department for Education, August 2024. Department for Education. (2024, August 19). <i>Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance.</i> London: Department for Education.	3

• Half-termly attendance review meetings ensure all relevant staff have an up-to-date, shared understanding of key pupils and the actions required to support improved attendance. • Structured home visits for persistent absentees		
• A welfare officer has been appointed to work with students requiring SEMH support. • The academy will continue to work in partnership with Solutions, a specialist programme supporting students with behavioural and engagement difficulties. • Through collaboration with 'With Me in Mind', students will have access to specialist youth counselling and mental health support. • The academy continues to buy in a counsellor /therapist to work with identified students on their SEMH. • Pastoral support enables pupils to demonstrate more positive behaviours, with bespoke SEMH interventions helping them reflect on their actions and develop effective coping strategies to overcome identified barriers. • The academy designs and delivers personalised in-house intervention programmes, available for students individually or within small group sessions. • Half-termly behaviour review meetings ensure all relevant staff have an up-to-date, shared understanding of key pupils and the actions required to support improved behaviour. • Restorative conversations framework for staff to use with students.	Education Endowment Foundation. (2025). <i>Social and emotional learning</i>. London: EEF Education Endowment Foundation. (2025). <i>Mentoring</i>. London: EEF Education Endowment Foundation. (2025). <i>Behaviour interventions</i>. London: EEF	3 and 4
• The Academy to be part of the DfE National School Breakfast Programme. So that all	Department for Education. (2025). <i>National School</i>	5

disadvantaged students over time have access to breakfast. • Provide uniform, equipment and revision resource support for disadvantaged pupils experiencing financial hardship. • Funding to be available so that students who are disadvantaged can fully participate in school life, extra-curricular activities and trips.	<i>Breakfast Club Programme.</i> EEF: Enrichment and cultural capital opportunities support aspiration, engagement and long-term outcomes. EEF (2025): Addressing material barriers supports engagement and attendance.	
---	--	--

Total budgeted cost: £ 225,000

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

During the last academic year, the school had 707 students on roll, with 29.56% eligible for free school meals—closely aligned with the national average. However, the school's location ranks significantly above average in terms of deprivation.

GCSE Outcomes

Table 1: IDSR All pupils – Overall A8 (2023-2025)

Year	Cohort	School %	National %	National distribution banding
2025	142	47.7	45.9	Close to average
2024	116	48.3	45.9	Close to average
2023	130	41.8	46.3	Close to average

Table 2: IDSR Disadvantaged pupils – Overall A8 (2023-2025)

Year	Cohort	School %	National %	National distribution banding
2025	48	41.1	34.9	Above
2024	23	38.0	34.6	Close to average
2023	31	32.0	35.0	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils at our school now significantly outperform disadvantaged pupils nationally for Attainment 8, demonstrating the impact of our targeted support and high-expectation culture. Over the past three years, the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils has consistently narrowed, reflecting improved access to high-quality teaching and intervention. Our ongoing strategy will focus on further reducing this gap by strengthening high-attainment pathways, attendance, and subject-level support.

Table 3: IDSR Disadvantaged pupils – English and mathematics 4 plus (2023-2025)

Year	Cohort	School %	National %	National distribution banding
2025	48	62.5	43.5	Close to average
2024	23	47.8	43.4	Close to average
2023	31	35.5	43.4	Close to average

Table 4: IDSR Disadvantaged pupils – English and mathematics 5 plus (2023-2025)

Year	Cohort	School %	National %	National distribution banding
2025	48	33.3	25.6	Above
2024	23	39.1	25.8	Close to average
2023	31	19.4	25.2	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' attainment in English and mathematics has improved significantly at Grade 4+, with 62.5% achieving both subjects in 2025 and significantly outperforming disadvantaged pupils nationally. While performance at Grade 5+ remains above national disadvantaged levels, the gap to non-disadvantaged pupils has widened, highlighting the need for targeted support and stretch for middle and higher-attaining disadvantaged learners. Our strategy will prioritise strengthening progress from Grade 4 to Grade 5 through focused intervention, high-quality teaching and curriculum access.

Disadvantaged pupils' English outcomes have improved strongly at both Grade 4+ and Grade 5+, moving from below national disadvantaged in 2023 to close to or above national averages in 2025. While the attainment gap with non-disadvantaged pupils remains, it has narrowed significantly across both measures, indicating improving equity alongside rising standards.

Disadvantaged pupils' attainment in mathematics has strengthened significantly at both Grade 4+ and Grade 5+, with 2025 outcomes now significantly above national disadvantaged levels. The gap with non-disadvantaged pupils has narrowed significantly and, at Grade 4+, has been eliminated and reversed, indicating strong impact of our mathematics intervention and curriculum strategy. However, a gap remains between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils at St Bede's, and this will be addressed through a new KS3 scheme of work and the introduction of Sparx Maths.

Attendance data

Table 5: IDSR FSM Attendance Data (2022/23–2024/25)

Year	Cohort	School %	National %	National distribution banding
2024/2025	215	90.7	88.2	Above
2023/2024	191	87.8	86	Close to average
2022/2023	189	86.5	86.0	Close to average

Table 6: IDSR FSM Persistent absence (2022/23–2024/25)

Year	Cohort	School %	National %	National distribution banding
2024/2025	215	29.8	34.5	Close to average
2023/2024	191	38.7	42.5	Close to average
2022/2023	189	45.0	43.8	Close to average

FSM outcomes have improved significantly over the last three years, rising from 86.5% in 2022/23 to 90.7% in 2024/25. This places the school 2.5 percentage points above national FSM outcomes and has resulted in movement from 'close to average' to 'above' national distribution banding.

Persistent absence among disadvantaged pupils has decreased significantly over three years, from 45.0% in 2022/23 to 29.8% in 2024/25. The school is now performing better than national FSM6 figures, with persistent absence rates 4.7% lower. Improvements have been maintained despite a growing cohort, demonstrating that attendance and pastoral interventions for disadvantaged pupils are embedded and increasingly effective.

Behaviour data

Suspension rates for disadvantaged pupils have increased over the past three years, in line with a national upward trend, but remain an area of concern. In 2023/24, 17.93% of FSM6 pupils received one or more suspensions, compared to 16.57% nationally, and 9.78% received two or more suspensions, slightly above national levels (9.40%). While these outcomes remain within the national "close to average" band, the data highlights that disadvantaged pupils continue to be over-represented in suspension figures, particularly in repeat suspensions.

This confirms our need to increase capacity for behaviour mentoring and pastoral support, strength the use of restorative approaches following incidents, provide targeted interventions for pupils with SEMH needs, and enhance multi-agency working with families. These actions are specifically focused on reducing repeat behaviour incident and suspension for disadvantaged pupils, while maintaining consistently high expectations for behaviour.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium to fund in the previous academic year.

Programme	Provider
White Rose Maths	White Rose Maths
SPARX	SPARX
Tassomai	Tassomai Ltd
Educake	EDcake Ltd
Accelerated Reader	Renaissance
Ruth Miskin	Ruth Miskin Literacy Ltd