

Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2026-27

Author: C Haughton

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Date of Review: September 2027

Part of



**The Sycamore
Church of England
Trust**

Grow together, Learn forever

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2026-27 financial 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.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	St. Thomas CEP
Number of pupils in school	440
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	22% (98 children)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	1 st April 2026 to 31 st March 2027
Date this statement was published	September 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2027
Statement authorised by	Emma Butler (Head of school) Caroline Haughton Emma Cliffe (SBM)
Pupil premium lead	Caroline Haughton
Governor / Trustee lead	Janet Adams

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	April 2026- March 2027 £147,250
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	£147,250
Total spend for this academic year	£150,618

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Vision and Values:

“With God all things are possible” Matthew 19:26

Vision

Our vision is to inspire, believe, and achieve through a strong foundation of Christian values. With God, all things are possible. We provide enriching experiences, believing in the potential of every learner. Through trust, friendship, respect, and kindness, we create a learning community where children flourish academically, socially, and spiritually.

Our vision is built on our strong Christian Values and that “With God all things are possible” Matthew 19:26. Our offer is closely aligned to the Church of England vision to live ‘Life in all its fullness’ John 10:10.

Aims

At St Thomas’s our strong vision support a curriculum that aims to

Inspire-All learners through the places they visit and the people they meet

Believe-That even in the face of adversity, anything is possible.

Achieve-Through what we know, learn and understand

Values

We are a learning community built on our core values of

Respect, courage, resilience, aspiration, hope and compassion

Barriers for disadvantaged children at St Thomas’s:

Communication and Language Development

Many of our pupils enter school with communication and language skills that are significantly below those typically seen for their age. A large proportion of children speak English as an Additional Language (EAL), and many have had limited opportunities to develop both spoken and written English before starting school. Vocabulary is often narrow, language structures are less developed, and early reading skills can be underdeveloped. As a result, pupils require high-quality language-rich teaching, targeted intervention and extensive opportunities to develop speaking, listening and communication skills across the curriculum.

Speech, Language and Communication Needs

Speech, language and communication difficulties are prevalent across the school. These needs can present barriers to learning, social interaction and emotional wellbeing. Limited language development impacts attainment across the curriculum, particularly in Communication and Language within the Early Years Foundation Stage, reading comprehension and writing. It can also affect pupils' ability to understand and use subject-specific vocabulary, explain their thinking and participate confidently in learning.

Social, Emotional and Personal Development

Many children begin school with limited experience of interacting beyond their immediate family unit. Developing positive relationships with peers and trusted adults therefore requires time, support and carefully planned opportunities. Early intervention through high-quality personal, social

and emotional learning helps children develop confidence, resilience, self-regulation and a sense of belonging within the school community.

Family Engagement and Home Learning

Some families face barriers that make it more difficult to support learning at home. These may include language barriers, limited confidence in supporting education, restricted access to resources or technology, and competing demands on family life. Building strong partnerships with parents and carers is therefore fundamental to ensuring pupils receive consistent support and encouragement both at home and at school.

Adverse Childhood Experiences and Family Circumstances

Some of our pupils experience complex family circumstances that can affect their wellbeing, attendance, engagement and readiness to learn. These challenges are often unique to each child and family and may require tailored support from school and external agencies. Staff work closely with families to ensure barriers are identified early and appropriate support is provided, recognising that there is no single solution that meets the needs of every child.

Social Deprivation and Community Context

The school serves a community with high levels of social deprivation. Many pupils have limited access to enrichment opportunities and experiences beyond their immediate environment. This can affect their background knowledge, aspirations and ability to make meaningful connections with curriculum content. School therefore plays a vital role in broadening pupils' experiences, developing cultural capital and creating opportunities that help them understand the wider world.

Health and Wellbeing

Living conditions within the community can impact both physical and emotional wellbeing. Overcrowded housing and poor-quality accommodation can contribute to challenges including poor oral health, obesity, sleep difficulties, anxiety and reduced mental wellbeing. These factors can affect children's ability to attend school regularly, engage fully in learning and achieve their potential. Promoting healthy lifestyles, emotional wellbeing and access to support services remains a key priority for the school.

A Responsive and Inclusive Approach

The barriers faced by our pupils are varied, complex and often interconnected. Consequently, there is no "one size fits all" approach to meeting need. The school adopts a graduated, inclusive approach that combines high-quality teaching, targeted interventions, pastoral support and strong family partnerships to ensure every child is supported to thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

Ultimate Objectives

- To ensure that all pupils, regardless of their language background, communication needs, family circumstances or level of disadvantage, develop the communication, confidence, knowledge and skills needed to achieve well academically, thrive socially and emotionally, and successfully access the next stage of their education.
- To diminish the difference between disadvantaged pupils and their peers by developing strong communication and language skills, broadening life experiences, improving attendance and wellbeing, and ensuring all pupils achieve their full academic potential.

Addressing the barriers

Communication and language development

Universal offer

- Establish a language-rich environment in every classroom.
- Explicitly teach and revisit vocabulary across all subjects.
- Use visual supports, Colourful Semantics, Makaton, signing and sentence stems.
- Implement structured talk opportunities in every lesson using the voice 21 principles
- Develop staff expertise in speech, language and communication needs.

Targeted Support

- Early speech and language screening on entry.
- Delivery of WELLCOMM an evidence-based language interventions for specific groups of children
- Small-group vocabulary programmes supported by speech therapist

Success Measures

- Improved Communication and Language outcomes at the end of EYFS.
- Increased attainment in reading and writing.
- Greater pupil confidence in speaking and being able to articulate their learning

Social, Emotional and Personal Development

Universal offer

- High-quality PSHE curriculum.
- Weekly sessions based on My Happy Minds
- Consistent behaviour expectations and use of micro-scripts
- Daily opportunities to develop resilience and self-regulation.

Targeted support

- Wellbeing clubs
- Mental health interventions supported by MHST worker

- Access to external agencies when required.

Success Measures

- Improved wellbeing indicators.
- Reduction in behaviour incidents.
- Increased confidence and resilience.

Family Engagement and Home Learning

Universal offer

- Open classrooms and stay-and-play sessions.
- Parent workshops on phonics, reading, language development and online safety.
- Family learning events linked to curriculum topics.
- Parent coffee mornings and community events.
- Curriculum plans published on the website outlining the children's learning
- termly reports sent home
- Curriculum showcase events throughout the year
- Access to a family support worker
- Language support and interpretation services where needed
- Home visits carried out for all new starters to school

Targeted support

- Attendance meetings where concerns emerge.
- Signposting to community resources.
- Support completing forms and accessing services.
- Parenting courses and family learning programmes.
- Access to devices, technology or internet support where available.
- Small-group parent workshops tailored to identified needs.

Success measures

- Strengthen relationships with families.
- Increase parental confidence in supporting learning.
- Improve attendance and engagement.
- Reduce barriers associated with language, deprivation and family circumstances.
- Enable disadvantaged pupils to achieve outcomes in line with their peers.
- Ensure pupils develop the communication, confidence and resilience needed to thrive both in school and beyond.

Social Deprivation and Community Context

Universal offer

Educational Experiences

- Curriculum-linked educational visits in every year group.

- Visitors and speakers from a range of professions, cultures and backgrounds.
- Forest School, outdoor learning and environmental education opportunities.
- Regular participation in music, drama and sporting activities.
- Access to extra-curricular clubs.
- Opportunities to take on responsibilities and leadership roles such as School Council, Peer Mentors, Eco Council and Sports Leaders.

Curriculum Enhancement

- A broad and ambitious curriculum that reflects experiences beyond pupils' immediate community.
- Opportunities to explore local, national and global issues through the curriculum.
- Diverse texts, role models and cultural experiences embedded within teaching.
- Aspirational careers and future pathways woven throughout the curriculum.
- Enrichment weeks, themed days and celebration events.

Targeted support

- Financial support to enable participation in educational visits, residential and after-school clubs.
- Priority access to enrichment activities where engagement is low.
- Small-group enrichment programmes linked to specific curriculum areas.
- Additional opportunities to attend sporting, musical and cultural events.
- Targeted leadership opportunities for disadvantaged pupils.
- Individual encouragement and support to participate in clubs and school events.

Success measures

- Increased participation in enrichment opportunities.
- Improved pupil engagement and motivation.
- Increased confidence in classroom discussions and learning.
- Pupils demonstrate broader knowledge of the world and future aspirations.
- Reduction in participation gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.
- Improved attainment through stronger connections between prior knowledge and new learning.
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Strategic priorities

Objective 1	Improve communication, language and literacy so pupils secure strong foundations to improve outcomes
Objective 2	Broaden pupils' life experiences, cultural capital and aspirations to support engagement and achievement
Objective 3	Promote excellent attendance, wellbeing and personal development so pupils are ready to learn and thrive
Objective 4	Work in partnership with families to remove barriers to learning and improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Activity in this academic year

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

Objective 1- Improve communication, language and literacy so pupils secure strong foundations to improve outcomes

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Support for INA by bilingual HLTA (1/2 hour 5 x's week £ 2283(KS)	TA to deliver Racing to English programme for children new to English or new to the county. EEF evidence teaching and learning toolkit (small group tuition)	1

Employment of staff to work in the Harbour to support our most vulnerable pupils 1x HLTA 37 hours £45899 1xTA 3 TK- 25 hours £31050 1xDHT 5 hours £17050	Currently 6 children accessing the Harbour- high staff: pupil ratio is needed to ensure safety and well-being of the children and to ensure targeted programmes can be delivered successfully. EEF evidence teaching and learning toolkit (small group tuition and 1:1 tuition) EEF evidence- Special Educational needs in mainstream settings	1	
Support from TA's to deliver Wellcomm intervention for identified groups of children with SEN or low levels of expressive/receptive language skills 5x 1 hour £3898 (WA) 5x 1 hour £4417 (KT)	Poor Language and Communication skills. Most children are working significantly, significantly below age related expectation on entry to Nursery when screened on WELLCOMM and remain significantly below on exit from EYS. Children are unlikely to have the breadth of vocabulary that reflects their experiences in the Early years. In KS1 and KS2, children with lower levels of expressive and receptive language are less likely to use talk to connect ideas and explain what is happening coherently. Currently 76% of children on the SEND register have SLCN and or Autism as their main area of need. EEF evidence teaching and learning toolkit (small group tuition and 1:1 tuition) EEF evidence oral language interventions EEF evidence- Special Educational needs in mainstream setting	1	
Support from HLTA to deliver additional phonics booster sessions each afternoon across Year and 2 1xHLTA 5 hours £4566 (KS)	The EEF rates phonics as having a +5 months additional progress impact, based on extensive evidence. Importantly, the EEF notes that phonics is effective both in whole-class teaching and when delivered through small-group or one-to-one interventions for pupils who need extra support The EEF identifies phonics as particularly important in closing literacy gaps because it develops the foundational reading skills on which later reading comprehension depends.		1

	EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit: EEF: Selecting Interventions for Pupils with SEND		
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Objective 2 Broaden pupils' life experiences, cultural capital and aspirations to support engagement and achievement

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Buy into Bury Schools sports programme to ensure access to a variety of sporting opportunities for all children £650	The EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit reports that physical activity approaches are associated with approximately +1 month's additional progress, alongside wider benefits including improved wellbeing, behaviour and engagement in learning.	2
Enrichment opportunities based on enrichment benchmarks- purchasing of resources to support delivery Resources £500	Provide access to a broad range of wider curriculum opportunities, including sports, arts, educational visits, leadership roles and enrichment activities, to develop pupils' confidence, resilience, teamwork, communication and self-regulation. This work is informed by EEF evidence relating to Arts Participation, Physical Activity, Outdoor Adventure Learning and Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning, which highlight the role enrichment opportunities can play in supporting engagement, personal development and improved outcomes. DFE Enrichment framework (2026) promotes providing all pupils with access to a high-quality enrichment offer and recognises the role enrichment plays in supporting personal development, engagement, wellbeing and wider opportunities	2

Objective 3 Promote excellent attendance, wellbeing and personal development so pupils are ready to learn and thrive

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Employment of a pastoral TA to support with physical and mental well-being at lunchtime TA 3 8 hours (SC) £3463	Many of our disadvantage pupils have challenging home lives and poor physical and mental health. Difficulties with behaviour impacts on attitude to learning and hinders progress. TAs used to support children to access peer mediation and mindfulness activities at lunchtime. EEF evidence: Improving social and emotional learning in primary schools (section 1 teaching strategies)	3
Continuation of a Breakfast club Employment of 3 TA's to run Breakfast club 2x's 5 hours (TK/PC) £4435 £4435 (MH) £3734	Breakfast club provision provides a calm, structured start to the school day, increasing opportunities for social interaction, supporting emotional wellbeing and promoting readiness to learn. EEF evidence suggests that breakfast provision can positively influence attendance, behaviour and academic attainment, making it an effective strategy for supporting vulnerable pupils. EEF evidence- (Breakfast provision- evidence and impact) EEF Project Evaluation: Magic Breakfast	3

Objective 4 Work in partnership with families to remove barriers to learning and improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Family support worker to work with families and vulnerable Pupils as well as promoting and monitoring attendance - 24 hour post £20514(AB)	Many of our parents need support to overcome barriers to their child's learning including attendance and support with parenting at home. Bilingual support is necessary to ensure effective communication between parents and school. Parents need to develop a trusting relationship with the FSW to talk about vulnerable situations at home. FSW to take on the role of safeguarding at stages 1 and 2 (Early help) and the role of attendance officer across school to monitor attendance, carry out home visits, meet with parents and report to Inclusion team on attendance every fortnight	4
Walk and talk sessions to promote parent well being FSW/HLTA 1x2 hours KS £1826x2	Walk and Talk sessions provide an informal opportunity for parents to connect with school staff and one another, helping to reduce isolation, increase parental confidence and strengthen collaborative partnerships that support children's emotional wellbeing and engagement with learning. EEF working with Parents to Support Children's Learning (EEF, 2018). EEF Parental Engagement Toolkit	4

