

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil 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 effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	St Thomas More High School, Kenilworth Gardens, Westcliff on Sea, Essex SS0 0BW
Number of pupils in school	1254 (7-11: 924) Nov 2025
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	15.3% as at Nov 2025 (141 pupils in 7-11)
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended)	2025 – 2028
Date this statement was published	November 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	November 2028
Statement authorised by	Mrs G Ackred
Pupil premium lead	Mr P Maxfield
Governor / Trustee lead	Mr D Cauchi

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£157,420 Recovery Premium has now ended
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for academic year (2024-25) If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	£157,420

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

St Thomas More High School prides itself on striving to ensure that all students have the support and opportunities to achieve their potential. It is the St Thomas More High School's philosophy that all students regardless of their background should experience and have access to the highest standard of education. It states in our mission statement as well as being '**God's Servant First**' we should all strive to fulfil our academic potential.

'Love for the Lord, is one with love of the poor' Pope Leo XIV, Dilexi Te, 5 (2025)

The Pupil Premium is a government funding initiative to provide additional money to schools in order to raise the attainment of children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Our Pupil Premium funding is used to pay for a huge range of resources and activities both within and beyond school with the aim of fully supporting those students to achieve their full potential. This includes providing a good quality of education which, in turn, improves life chances of pupils; breaking the link between background and outcomes; recognising that barriers compound—pupils facing one challenge are more likely to face others; and fostering a strong sense of belonging at school, which correlates positively with academic achievement, motivation, and behavioural outcomes.

We also welcome the direction of the 2026 Government White Paper on pupil attainment, which is expected to focus on raising standards, increasing accountability, and promoting inclusive education. The White Paper outlines reforms aimed at improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, including enhanced support systems and a renewed emphasis on personalised learning and vocational pathways. These national priorities align closely with our own commitment to ensuring every student has the opportunity to succeed, regardless of background.

There is no requirement for this money to be spent on individual students if they meet the eligibility, however, it is necessary to allocate the funding to this group of students (as well as other pupils from lower income families) so that these students can be provided the same opportunities to make the same progress as their peers.

Guiding principals

- Never confuse eligibility for the Pupil Premium with low ability and focus on supporting our disadvantaged pupils to achieve the highest levels.
- Thoroughly analyse which pupils are underachieving, particularly in English and Mathematics, and question why.
- Draw on research evidence (Education Endowment Foundation) to allocate the funding to activities that are most likely to have significant impact on improving achievement.

- Are very clear about the importance of ensuring that all day-to-day teaching meets the needs of each learner, rather than relying on interventions to compensate for teaching that is less than good. Quality First Teaching is paramount.
- Allocate their best teachers to teach intervention groups to improve Mathematics and English.
- Use achievement data frequently to check whether interventions or strategies are working and make adjustments accordingly, rather than using the data retrospectively to see if something has worked.
- Make sure that support staff, particularly teaching assistants, are highly trained and understand their role in helping pupils to achieve.
- Systematically focus on giving pupils clear, useful feedback about their work, and ways that they could improve it.
- Ensure that the Senior Leadership Team has a clear overview of how the funding is being allocated and the difference it is making to the outcomes for pupils.
- Ensure that class and subject teachers know which pupils are eligible for the Pupil Premium so that they can take responsibility for accelerating their progress. This also applies to teaching assistants.
- Provide well-targeted support to improve attendance, behaviour or links with families where these were barriers to a pupil's learning.
- Have a clear and robust appraisal system for all staff and include discussions about pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium in appraisal and pupil progress meetings.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Attainment and Progress Gaps – at present we have a number of gaps in progress and attainment, particularly at GCSE level
2	Literacy - vocabulary deficits and reading - our assessments, discussions and observations have identified that our Pupil Premium students are likely to have a tier 2 and 3 vocabulary deficit and reading comprehension issues may be preventing them from accessing certain parts of the curriculum. This impacts on students' ability to engage with the curriculum, complete assessments and join in with discussions in class.
3	Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs – our assessments, discussions and observations have identified social and self-confidence issues more so for our disadvantaged students compared to those who are not disadvantaged. A number of our students that are disadvantaged find it hard to cope emotionally to a changing of the world, family circumstances and to regulate emotions.
4	Parental Engagement – our discussions, analysis of data and observations have identified that those pupils whose parents/guardians are harder to reach, are not making as much progress as those that are not. This is particularly true for the 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
1. Attainment and Progress Gap between PP students and their peers continues to narrow. (link to challenge 1)	Improve % of PP students achieving above National Average for A8 Decrease GAP in attainment and progress between PP v Non-PP
2. To improve literacy of PP students. (link to challenge 2)	Improve reading ages Improve quality of written work Improve oracy skills
3. To improve wellbeing (link to challenge 3)	Improve self-esteem and prosocial behaviour
4. To improve parental engagement of PP students (link to challenge 4)	Increase attendance at events, parent's consultation evenings Increase parental engagement with other wider school strategies

Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £93,000

Activity	Cost	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Classroom Support	£45000	Teaching assistants can provide a large positive impact on learner outcomes, how TAs are deployed is key <i>+4 months impact – teaching assistant interventions (EEF)</i> <i>+2 months impact – mentoring (EEF)</i>	Classroom assistants can help to reduce the staff to pupil ratios and provide support to the less able and disadvantaged in lessons, thus helping to close attainment and progress gaps (Challenge 1) By providing additional staffing we can also run intervention sessions with those that need it according to their reading ages (Challenge 2) They can also help to identify those pupils requiring more SEMH support and those who find it difficult to regulate emotions (Challenge 3)
Progress mentors and pastoral support	£45000	To ensure that someone remains focused on the needs and pastoral support of the PP students in our school <i>+3 months impact – social and emotional learning (EEF)</i> <i>+2 months impact – mentoring (EEF)</i>	It is imperative that we keep a focus on this area of the school so by ensuring that someone is there to champion, mentor, monitor progress and respond to challenges the disadvantaged pupils can help with all challenges (Challenge 1-4)
Staff training on improving feedback	£3000	Quality Teaching is most impactful for PP pupils. Feedback has a positive impact through supporting pupils to focus future learning on areas of weakness, through identifying and explaining misconceptions, through supporting them in taking greater responsibility for their own improvement or through increasing pupils' motivation to improve. <i>+6 months impact – feedback (EEF)</i>	To ensure that the progress / attainment gap closes we need to ensure that we have excellent teaching (much of the research has identified quality first teaching as the main factor in success), as such an investment in CPD is key (Challenge 1) as we are also rolling out a literacy strategy the first of which is reading and the vocabulary gap we feel that CPD is necessary to equip staff with the right tools to do this effectively (Challenge 3)

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

Budgeted cost: £21,420

Activity	Cost	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Guided Reading Programme	£3000	<p>We are focussed on improving literacy is key to learning across all subjects in secondary school and a strong predictor of outcomes in later life.</p> <p>We have developed a disciplinary literacy strategy that takes place for all students on a weekly basis. All departments/staff are trained and incorporating literacy strategies to their curriculum areas.</p> <p><i>+7 months impact – reading comprehension strategies (EEF)</i></p>	<p>To close the progress and attainment gap for our pupils we need to ensure that ALL students have the literacy and reading age to access the curriculum fully (Challenge 1)</p> <p>This will also ensure that we meet challenge 2 as a result of everyone embedding literacy and reading into the curriculum as well as directed reading.</p>
Developing Writing skills	£3000	<p>Writing is a complex skill to develop and master, focusing on both the end product and the steps to arrive there. Writing skills only develop when learners are taught how to write and are given opportunities to practice these skills and strategies. The end goal will be to produce an authentic piece of written work e.g. writing to inform, to thank etc. Success will be gauged by the accuracy of the content and accuracy of the text.</p> <p><i>+5 months impact – mastery learning (EEF)</i></p>	<p>To close the progress and attainment gap for our pupils we need to ensure that ALL students have the literacy and reading age to access the curriculum fully (Challenge 1)</p> <p>This will also ensure that we meet challenge 2 as a result of everyone embedding literacy and reading into the curriculum as well as directed reading.</p>
Oral language interventions	£3000	<p>Oral language approaches can boost progress (+6 months), mainly through reading comprehension, and support literacy across subjects. They may also improve attitudes, attention, and confidence, though impact on science/math is unclear. Speaking and listening combined works best; identify pupils needing extra support and tailor activities.</p> <p><i>+6 months impact – Oral Language strategies (EEF)</i></p>	<p>Oral language interventions can be an effective approach for disadvantaged pupils. In the research evidence, the higher the proportion of disadvantaged pupils taking part, the more effective the intervention seemed to be (Challenge 2)</p>
School led small group tutoring	£4000	<p>EEF – Extending the school time creates low impact for moderate cost, collaborative learning can create a moderate impact based on low costs.</p> <p><i>+2 months impact – extending school time (EEF)</i></p>	<p>We have been developing a number of different opportunities for one-to-one tuition, small groups tuition and intervention sessions to help close the progress and attainment gaps that exist (Challenge 1)</p>

		<i>+5 months impact – collaborative learning (EEF)</i>	
Brilliant Club	£4000	To raise aspirations of DA pupils in our school and to give them a university experience, especially those with high prior attainment, <i>+4 months impact – social and emotional learning (EEF)</i>	By becoming involved with the Brilliant club we are choosing students carefully on their ability and aspirations, this can help close the progress gap (Challenge 1), improving the students literacy and academic writing (Challenge 2) as well as helping improve social and emotional learning (Challenge 3)
Revision Packs	£2210	Homework activities vary significantly, particularly between younger and older pupils, including but not limited to home reading activities, longer projects or essays and more directed and focused work such as revision for tests.	Lack of resources and guidance of how to use them can reduce the progress of disadvantaged students, we ensure that all students have access to the materials that they need (Challenge 1) to develop their knowledge, literacy and content for their examinations. (Challenge 2) as well as to help close the gap, this can help give the students confidence, boosting self-esteem in their academic studies (Challenge 3)
Revision Guides	£2210	<i>+5 months impact – homework related activities (EEF)</i>	

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

Budgeted cost: £43,000

Activity	Cost	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Attendance, EWO and Admin	£19,000	There is some evidence of promise for parental communication and engagement approaches and responsive interventions that meet the individual needs of the pupils. The interventions that show promise take a holistic approach in understanding pupils and their specific need and address the specific barriers to attendance that have been identified. <i>+3 months impact – social and emotional learning (EEF)</i> <i>+2 months impact – mentoring (EEF)</i>	We have a small gap in absence/persistent absence in our disadvantaged versus non-disadvantaged students – we feel that any absence has a negative effect on social and emotional wellbeing (Challenge 3) as well as that being the reason for some absences. This also helps with the line of communication through school comms and attendance officer which can help parental engagement especially in line with the supportive aspect of the green paper and white paper (Challenge 4)
Careers	£4,000	Some evidence suggests that some pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds show low engagement with or have low expectations of schooling. Careers mentoring may be more beneficial for these pupils, as the development of trusting	Careers education can help to close the gap in progress and attainment for giving the students something to work towards (Challenge 1) It can also help to increase aspirations and confidence to succeed and be open to the choices available to them which

		relationships with an adult or older peer can provide a different source of support. <i>+3 months impact – social and emotional learning (EEF)</i> <i>+2 months impact – mentoring (EEF)</i>	they may not be advised otherwise (Challenge 3)
Supporting Parent workshops	£2,000	Effective engagement is challenging, requires careful monitoring, and parents are often hard to involve; low-cost strategies like text message prompts show some positive impact. Parents' aspirations matter but benefits may extend to siblings. <i>+4 months impact – parental engagement (EEF)</i>	Study skills sessions, parent workshops (including safety online, RSE workshops) etc are used as a way of both giving students the support in their future assessments (Challenge 1), aspirations and future plans (Challenge 3) as well as helping to engage the parents in other ways apart from parents' evenings (Challenge 4)
Counselling	£4,000	Successful SEL interventions improve attitudes to learning and social relationships. Academic gains are more likely when SEL is embedded in routine practice and supported by staff training. <i>+3 months impact – social and emotional learning (EEF)</i>	Counsellors are incredibly vital to the social and emotional well-being of our students (Challenge 2)
Educational Psych	£4,000	Successful SEL interventions improve attitudes to learning and social relationships. Academic gains are more likely when SEL is embedded in routine practice and supported by staff training. <i>+3 months impact – social and emotional learning (EEF)</i>	Educational psychologists are vital in helping assess the needs of our pupils and to help in gaining exam access arrangements where possible/required (Challenge 1 and 2)
Trip costs	£6,000	To encourage fairness and ensure that through equity not quality all students have the same opportunities to learn offsite. <i>+4 months impact – outdoor adventure learning (EEF)</i>	To ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to go on educational visits rather than missing out compared to their non-disadvantaged peers. This will help to help boost the self-esteem of pupils (Challenge 3)
Summer school transition work	£4,000	Pupils attending summer school make around three months' additional progress compared to those who do not. Impact is greatest when summer schools are intensive, well-resourced, and use small group or one-to-one teaching.	To ensure that we get to know the pupils quickly and identify any issues as soon as possible. This will help to feel more social and emotionally secure in their transition (Challenge 3) and to engage with parents at the earliest opportunities (Challenge 4)

		Having teachers known to pupils provides an added advantage. <i>+3 months impact – social and emotional learning (EEF)</i> <i>+3 months impact – summer school (EEF)</i>	
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Total budgeted cost: £157,420

ACTUAL £157,420

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Statistics and funding allocation

In the academic year, 2024-2025, there were 183 disadvantaged students on roll, 151 of which were in Years 7-11; 30 of which were in Year 11. Pupil Premium students made up 16.6% of the Year 11 cohort. Pupil Premium budget allocation for this academic year was £139,650.

Statistics and Funding Impact

- In 2024-2025, 69.2% of our PPI students achieved Grades 9-4 in at least 5 Subjects including English and Maths at GCSE (Non-PP 78.0%; overall 76.7%).
- Our Progress 8 score for PP qualifying students was +0.2 (Non-PP +0.5; overall +0.45) and our Attainment 8 average for PP students was 4.87 (non-PP was 5.39; overall 5.32)
- Disadvantaged pupils at St Thomas More High School outperformed all key measures for disadvantaged pupils nationally and most key measures for all pupils nationally.
- Students in the Sixth Form are not included in the Pupil Premium calculation - there is a separate 16-19 Bursary Fund to provide financial support to Sixth Form students whose families are on low incomes. Further details about this including how to apply are available from the [Sixth Form](#) support page on the school website.

Disadvantaged Pupils Performance - Year 11

	STM DA Aug 2025	National Average for DA pupils ¹	Performance Differential	National Average for All Pupils ²	Performance Differential
9-4 in English	80.8%	55.9%	+24.9	74.5%	+6.3
9-5 in English	61.5%	40.6%	+20.9	60.3%	+1.2
9-4 in Maths	69.2%	49.4%	+19.8	70.0%	-0.8
9-5 in Maths	57.7%	31.0%	+26.7	51.7%	+6.0
9-4 in English and Maths	69.2%	43.4%	+25.8	65.0%	+4.2
9-5 in English and Maths	53.8%	25.6%	+28.2	45.2%	+8.6
EBacc APS	3.86	3.02	+0.84	4.08	-0.22
Attainment 8 (A8)	48.7	34.9	+13.8	45.9	+2.8
Progress 8 (P8)	+0.2	-0.57	+0.77	-0.03	+0.23

¹ [All state-funded pupil characteristics and geography data, Data set from Key stage 4 performance - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)

² [Key stage 4 performance, Academic year 2024/25 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)