St. Mary's Church of England Primary School Fownhope 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
Number of pupils in school	75
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	22.09%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	1 (2026/27)
Date this statement was published	September 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2027
Statement authorised by	Chair of Governors
Pupil premium lead	Tim Milne – Headteacher
Governor / Trustee lead	James Pothecary

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£19,550 (including £1,400 service and £3,000 looked-after)
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0.00
Total budget for this academic year	**£19,550**

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Walking together in the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22 -23). Being an inclusive school, we believe that all children have the right to a broad and balanced education. Here at St. Mary's, the school curriculum is underpinned by the Christian values that run through our everyday school life. The curriculum is the means by which the school achieves its objective of educating children in the knowledge, skills and understanding that will give them the best start in their next stage of education.

Here at St. Mary's, we aim for all pupils, irrespective of their background or the challenges they face, to make good progress and achieve as highly as possible across a broad and balanced curriculum. The focus of our pupil premium strategy is for our disadvantaged pupils to be supported to achieve their full potential in all areas of school life.

At St. Mary's the following groups of children make up our 'pupil premium' cohort.

Free school meals: 8 out of 75 children = 10.66%
Looked after children: 2 out of 75 children = 2.66%
Service children: 4 out of 75 children = 5.33 %

In addition to those listed above, many other children in our school are disadvantaged in other ways. All of these children, as well as the ones listed above, have been considered and targeted when planning our strategy.

High-quality teaching is at the heart of our approach, with a focus on areas in which disadvantaged pupils require the most support. As well as high quality teaching in the classroom, several experienced support staff are employed to support the children both in and out of lessons, using a range of techniques and interventions, teaching on a 1-1 and small group basis. We also employ a part-time pastoral support assistant, trained as an emotional literacy support assistant, who works with vulnerable pupils, mainly on a 1-1 basis, to provide emotional and behavioural support.

Our approach is based on regular diagnostic assessment and the staff's thorough knowledge of every individual child and their specific needs. The approaches we have adopted will enable pupils to achieve to the best of their ability. To ensure they are effective we will:-

- ensure that all disadvantaged pupils are identified and challenged in the work that they are set;
- act early to give pupils the very best chance of fulfilling their potential;
- adopt a whole school approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and raise expectations of what they can achieve;
- remember that many pupils have been disadvantaged in a variety of ways;

- provide emotional and behavioural support (rather than/ in addition to academic) for disadvantaged pupils, using the school's emotional literacy support assistant to work with those children identified for support.

Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Assessments, observations and discussions with pupils indicate underdeveloped oral language skills and vocabulary gaps among many disadvantaged pupils.
2	Assessments, observations, and discussions with pupils suggest that many of our disadvantaged pupils are having difficulties with phonics. This negatively impacts their development as readers.
3	Data from the end of the summer term 2026 shows that children in receipt of free school meals were attaining lower than all other children in **reading** (33% compared with 68%)**.** They were performing significantly lower in this area than those children in receipt of service premium (83%).
4	Assessment data has shown that at the end of the academic year 2025-26, attainment for disadvantaged pupils in **writing** was slightly lower than for non-disadvantaged pupils (50% compared with 54%).
5	Assessment data has shown that at the end of the academic year 2025-26, the progress of looked-after children for **maths** was significantly lower than for all other pupils (67% compared with 93%).
6	Our assessments, observations and discussions with pupils and families have identified social, emotional and mental health issues faced by many 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
Improved **oral language skills** and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils.	Assessments and observations indicate significantly improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in lessons, book scrutiny and ongoing formative assessment.
Improved **reading** attainment among children receiving free school meals.	Outcomes at the end of the summer term 2026 show that **more than 60%** of pupils in receipt of free school meals are meeting the expected standard in reading (compared with 33% in summer 2026).
Improved **writing** attainment for all pupils receiving pupil premium funding.	Outcomes at the end of the summer term 2026 show that **more than 65%** of pupils receiving pupil premium funding are meeting the expected standard in writing (compared with 50% in summer 2026).
Improved progress in **maths** for looked-after children.	Outcomes at the end of the summer term 2026 show that **100%** of looked-after children (2 children) have made the expected progress between September 2026 and July 2027 (compared with 67% in July 2026).
To achieve and sustain improved **wellbeing** for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing in 2026-27, demonstrated by:- • qualitative data from pupil voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations • a significant reduction in social, behavioural and emotional issues • a significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among 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.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £7,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Employment of teaching assistants to teach a synthetic phonics programme in small, focussed groups according to children's ability.	Targeted, differentiated phonics teaching in small groups has been proven to increase children's phonic abilities, enabling them to make good progress with their reading and writing.	1,2,3,4
Employment of teaching assistants to run catch-up groups and interventions.	Targeted 1-1 teaching and small support groups have been proven to rapidly enable children to return to the expected level, particularly those who are only one sub-level behind the expectation.	1, 2, 3, 4,5
Ongoing training for staff, particularly those new to the school, to ensure that assessments are interpreted and administered correctly and to enable them to confidently deliver suitable intervention programmes.	Assessment and interventions can complement each other when staff feel confident and have adequate training. Interventions to be used and for staff to be trained in using include:- • RWI (Read Write Inc synthetic phonics) • Literacy Gold	1, 2, 3, 4
Embedding dialogic activities across the school curriculum. These can support pupils to articulate key ideas, consolidate understanding and extend vocabulary. Teaching assistants to be used to support this approach.	There is a strong evidence base that suggests oral language interventions, including dialogic activities such as high-quality classroom discussion, are inexpensive to implement with high impacts on reading.	1, 2
Training staff to assess the gaps in children's foundational skills and knowledge and enabling them to 'fill the gaps' throughout the	Ofsted (May 2026): *Some pupils have not secured the basic knowledge that they need in handwriting, spelling, grammar and mathematics. This*	1,2,3,4,5

school through high-quality teaching of foundational skills and knowledge.	*means that they find it harder to apply their knowledge accurately.*	

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

Budgeted cost: £5,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
1-1 and small group support and catch-up interventions in foundational skills and knowledge	Targeted 1-1 teaching and small support groups have been proven to rapidly enable children to return to the expected level, particularly those who are only one sub-level behind the expectation.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Additional phonics sessions targeted at disadvantaged pupils who require further phonics support	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base indicating a positive impact on pupils, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds.	2, 3, 4
Targeted support in writing and maths for looked-after children.	Targeted 1-1 support for these children will enable them to increase their rate of progress and close the gap between them and other children in the school.	1, 4, 5, 6

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

Budgeted cost: £6,550

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Increasing the hours of our ELSA (emotional literacy support assistant to support children with emotional and behavioural needs	Recent evidence suggests that many children are displaying emotional, social and behavioural differences, leading to anxiety and issues with mental health and self-confidence.	6

Continuation of a daily 'nurture group' to support a targeted group of vulnerable children with social, behavioural and emotional differences, ensuring that the children are not missing out of the teaching of foundational skills in order to participate.	Nurture groups have been proven to be successful in helping to build the confidence, elf-esteem and social skills of children who are vulnerable for a range of reasons.	6
Employment of a coach from an external Christian-based company to provided targeted 1-1 mentoring for vulnerable children, particularly those from service families.	Recent evidence suggests that many children are displaying emotional, social and behavioural differences, leading to anxiety and issues with mental health and self-confidence. There is also evidence that children who have at least one parent who works away with the services can suffer with anxiety and low self-esteem.	6
Provide an extra-curricular club to provide an extra opportunity exclusively for children receiving service premium.	Research has shown that children from military families often need extra emotional support at school due to having moved from school to school more frequently than other children.	6

Total budgeted cost: £19,550

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

During the academic year 2025-26, we used pupil premium funding to provide academic and wellbeing support for many of our pupils, and targeted interventions where required. We are building on that approach with the activities detailed in this plan.

Pupil behaviour, wellbeing and mental health were a high priority for the school in the academic year 2025-26. A higher than ever percentage of children were identified as 'vulnerable' and were internally referred for pastoral support and/ or 1-1 mentoring by an external coach.

The below table shows the attainment of disadvantaged children across Years 1-6 in reading, writing and maths as at the end of the academic year 2025-26.

	Reading (%)	Writing (%)	Maths (%)
Free School Meals	33.33	33.33	33.33
Service	83	83	83
Looked After	0	100	0
All Pupil Premium	50	50	50
Whole School	**67.95**	**53.85**	**60.26**

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
Literacy Gold	Engaging Eyes Ltd
Numbots	Maths Circle Ltd
Times Tables Rock Stars	Maths Circle Ltd

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year
We employed a coach from an external Christian-based company to provided targeted 1-1 mentoring for children from service families. Our pastoral support assistant also worked 1-1 and with a nurture group containing some of our service premium children.
The impact of that spending on service premium eligible pupils
Service children felt supported and listened to. The children greatly enjoyed their 1-1 and group sessions, and it was noticed that their social interactions and self-confidence had improved as a result.

"Walking together in the fruit of the Spirit"

(Galatians 5:22-23)