# Pupil premium strategy statement – Thornleigh Salesian College

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 outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

## School overview

| Detail | Data |
|---|---|
| Number of pupils in school | 1574 |
| Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils | 30.3% |
| Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers **(3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement for each academic year)** | 2025/2026 to 2027/2028 |
| Date this statement was published | December 2025 |
| Date on which it will be reviewed | June 2026 |
| Statement authorised by | Mike Fitzsimons, Headteacher |
| Pupil premium lead | Matthew Harwood, Deputy Headteacher |
| Governor / Trustee lead | Anne-Marie Parkinson<br>Chair of governing board |

## Funding overview

| Detail | Amount |
|---|---|
| Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year | £463,800 |
| Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years | £0.00 |
| **Total budget for this academic year** | £463,800 |

# Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

## Statement of intent

We believe strongly that the most effective strategies for improving outcomes for disadvantaged students is a key part of our curriculum vision to provide education for all. This ensures that all students in our care, including those that are disadvantaged, are exposed to and provided with the highest quality education. However, informed by and rooted in our Salesian ethos and teachings of St John Bosco, we are acutely aware of the additional barriers faced by disadvantaged students that affect academic outcomes. Pupil Premium students at Thornleigh Salesian School often face more barriers to learning than their non-disadvantaged peers and other disadvantaged students due to the size of the school and the location of deprivation both being well above average. Disadvantaged students at Thornleigh are predominantly 'white British' and experience even greater challenges because of their wider circumstances. Moreover many are living in areas with high crime, which affects how safe they feel and experience challenges at home, such as mental health concerns, referrals to services and housing issues. Some students also have caring responsibilities at home. In addition, some families find it harder to engage with school due to work patterns, confidence or past experiences. Although this does not fit neatly into one category, it remains an important challenge that can strongly affect disadvantaged students. We are committed to meeting these challenges head-on to ensure they can benefit from the high-quality provision aimed to ensure strong outcomes for all students. Attendance is fundamental to the success of students, particularly disadvantaged students who face barriers in travelling to school which we will target to improve the attendance of disadvantaged students removing barriers particularly in travelling to school. When in school access to the curriculum is essential, however, our evidence shows that many disadvantaged students have lower starting points in their reading ages and literacy capabilities than their peers. Therefore, the targeting and removal of this barrier through reading and literacy support in all subjects supported by bespoke intervention is essential in removing this barrier for disadvantaged students to access the complete curriculum. Our intention is for all disadvantaged students to understand that they can be successful in their subjects, and the use of assessment and reporting data is essential in ensuring that disadvantaged students are supported in knowing where they have made progress in the curriculum and how they can improve. Linked to this is the improvement of personal development for disadvantaged students which is essential in supporting their curriculum and improving not only their aspirations but overcoming barriers in realising these. We aim to create a comprehensive personal development programme which addresses and overcomes the barriers faced by disadvantaged students in accessing a range of opportunities which support their personal development. Strong behaviour and routines provide an essential bedrock of success for all students, however so often disadvantaged students are overrepresented in sanctions and instances of negative behaviour. Through a clear system of strong

routines, married with intervention and support, we aim to improve the behaviour and conduct of all students, ensuring that all our safe and model expected behaviours and that disadvantaged students do not become a group which is targeted or over represented in suspensions, exclusions and internal sanctions. Moreover our aim is for the school to become a haven where disadvantaged students feel safe and secure in overcoming the barriers they face to success.

## Challenges

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

| Challenge number | Detail of challenge |
|---|---|
| 1 | **Attendance**<br>Our attendance data over the last 3 years indicates that attendance among disadvantaged pupils has been between 6.9% and 7.8% lower than for non-disadvantaged pupils. In 2024-25 the attendance of disadvantaged students was 87.2% compared to the whole school attendance of 92.1%. In addition, between 37.3% - 43%% of disadvantaged pupils have been 'persistently absent' compared to 13 - 20% of their peers during that period. A postcode analysis has shown that two key barriers for disadvantaged students are public transport in BL3 where only one bus as a means of getting to school, or walking routes present some challenges to the safety of students in BL1. Community factors like unsafe roads, frequent house moves and high-need neighbourhoods can also lead to low attendance, lateness and students being less ready to learn. |
| 2 | **Poor reading ability and literacy**<br>Reading tests have indicated that 38.8% of all students in Years 7-11 have reading abilities below the expected level for their study and as such have difficulty in accessing the curriculum. However this is particularly acute in students who are disadvantaged where 48.2% are reading below their chronological age. This presents a challenge to accessing the curriculum and being able to make progress. The largest proportion of these are classified as 'Amber' readers who are reading between 8-14 months below their chronological age. |
| 3 | **Assessment and Reporting**<br>The outcomes for disadvantaged students are not in line with those of non-disadvantaged peers and the result of a number of factors. In 2025 only 34.% of disadvantaged students achieved 5 standard passes including English and Mathematics and only 20% achieved 5 strong passes including English and Maths. The assessment and reporting of this not sufficiently informed disadvantaged students and their parents of the progress being made and how to improve to be successful. Some |

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| | students also have caring responsibilities at home, which reduces the time and energy they have for study. Significantly, disadvantaged students make up a higher proportion or lower ability sets in English (46%) and Mathematics (48%) where challenges in providing access to an adapted curriculum are further exacerbated by systemic or historic negative attitudes towards school as well as barriers in transport, as well as other barriers such as digital exclusion, where students have limited access to suitable facilities for homework and revision such as devices and Wi-Fi, or a quiet place to study. |
| 4 | **Personal Development**<br><br>Disadvantaged students have not fully accessed the wider curriculum in strong numbers or in line with non-disadvantaged peers. Therefore there is a need to create opportunities which are accessible to disadvantaged students in terms of extra-curricular activities. In addition, a personal development programme which takes place in school and addresses specific issues for our students who are affected by negative opinions towards education, or low aspirations for the next steps. Currently 10% of disadvantaged students are identified as NEET from the 2023 cohort which indicates a need to provide greater academic success for next steps as well as information and guidance. |
| 5 | **Behaviour and wellbeing**<br><br>Our assessments (including wellbeing surveys), observations and discussions with students and families have identified social and emotional issues for many pupils, such as anxiety, depression and low self-esteem. Many also have unmet SEND or emotional needs because support from external services can be slow. In addition, some families find it harder to engage with school due to work patterns, confidence or past experiences. These challenges particularly affect disadvantaged pupils, and their ability to adjust and regulate to clear structures in school. Currently disadvantaged students are over represented in the consequences applied to poor behaviour, making up 48% of lesson removals. In addition disadvantaged students made up over 50% of suspensions in the last two years. |

## 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 |
|---|---|
| To achieve improved and sustained attendance of all disadvantaged | Overall attendance of disadvantaged students will improve to 90% and the % of disadvantaged students who are PA will reduce to 30%. |

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| students, particularly those who are identified in the BL1 and BL3 postcodes, to access a high-quality curriculum. | |
| To improve the reading and literacy abilities of all students including those who are disadvantaged, improving access to the curriculum. | Reading and data will indicate improved reading ability and skills of disadvantaged students reducing the numbers who are below their chronological age by 5%, with a reduced disparity in ability between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students. The number of disadvantaged students identified as 'Amber' readers reduces by 15% and and 'Green' readers by 25%. |
| To improve the assessment of the curriculum and how this is reported, so that all teachers, students and parents, particularly those who are disadvantaged have clear guidance in how to be successful. | Formative and summative assessments accurately reflect the intended and implemented curriculum so that the progress of disadvantaged students is accurately judged and acted upon. Progress reports are effective in ensuring that staff, students and parents understand how best to support disadvantaged students in making progress in line with their non-disadvantaged peers. CPD is effective in supporting teachers in judging progress of all students, particularly those who are disadvantaged. The performance of students attending intervention improves to close attainment gap in all subject areas. |
| To ensure the personal development programme provides all students, especially disadvantaged students, with effective and meaningful life skills. | PSHE, extra-curricular activities, and careers provision is effective in equipping disadvantaged students with key skills for further education, training and employment. The number of disadvantaged students who are considered NEET reduces by 5%. |
| To improve the wellbeing and behaviour of disadvantaged students so that they access the high-quality curriculum. | Behaviour of disadvantaged students improves so they are no longer over-represented, indicated by reduction in lesson removals and serious sanctions by 15%, and suspensions by 10% by the end of 2026. |

## 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: **£147,600**

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---|---|---|
| Purchase of standardised diagnostic assessments and NGRT for cognitive ability and reading ability in all year groups. | When used effectively, diagnostic assessments can indicate areas for development for individual pupils, or across classes and year groups:<br>Diagnostic assessment \| EEF | 2, 3 |
| Using the Lexonic reading programme to identify and improve the reading abilities of disadvantaged students. This will improve access to the curriculum in all subjects. | The conscious modelling of effective reading ensures that students are exposed to expert reading which can be applied across their subjects.<br><br>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/reading-comprehension-strategies | 2, 3 |
| Enhancement of our maths teaching and curriculum planning in line with DfE KS3 and EEF guidance.<br>. | The DfE non-statutory KS3 guidance has been produced in conjunction with the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics, drawing on evidence-based approaches:<br>Teaching mathematics at key stage 3<br>To teach maths well, teachers need to assess pupils' prior knowledge and understanding effectively, employ manipulatives and representations, teach problem solving strategies, and help pupils to develop more complex mental models:<br>Improving Mathematics in Key Stages 2 and 3 | 1, 3 |
| Improving literacy in all subject areas through a whole school policy in line with recommendations in the EEF | Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for students as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject: | 2, 3, 4 |

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| Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools guidance.<br>We will fund professional development and instructional coaching focussed on each teacher's subject area. | Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools<br>Reading comprehension, vocabulary and other literacy skills are heavily linked with attainment in all subjects:<br>word-gap (Oxford University Press) | |
| Developing strong oracy and ability in verbal communication. | The ability of students to communicate with their peers not only improves confidence in their subject knowledge but how this can be explained and underpins written communication of students' understanding.<br><br>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions | 2, 3, 4 |
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## Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: **£88,500**

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---|---|---|
| One to one and small group tuition and intervention for students identified targeting gaps in knowledge and understanding and shared through reporting. | Tuition targeted at specific needs and knowledge gaps can be an effective method to support low attaining pupils or those falling behind:<br>One to one tuition \| Teaching and Learning Toolkit \| EEF<br>Small group tuition \| Teaching and Learning Toolkit \| EEF | 2, 3, 4 |
| Revision materials and support in how to use these effectively in revision will be provided to support preparation for final exams. | Teaching metacognitive strategies to students is an inexpensive method and will help students become more independent learners.<br>Metacognition and self-regulation \| Teaching and Learning Toolkit \| EEF | 2, 3, 4 |
| Targeted Lexoinc and reading intervention for students who need bespoke support in accessing the curriculum. | By improving the abilities of students to understand encoding and decoding, existing gaps from primary school can | |

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| | be closed and access to a whole school reading strategy is increased.<br>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/phonics | |
| Peer tutoring by students who have proven success in KS4 and are now studying at a higher level. | Students who have previously achieved well in KS4 can provide peer tutoring in core knowledge and exam skills required for those students who have specific gaps.<br><br>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/peer-tutoring | |

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

Budgeted cost: **£227,700**

| Activity | Evidence that supports this approach | Challenge number(s) addressed |
|---|---|---|
| Adoption of a cognitive behavioural support and intervention for specific students identified with previous trauma or who require support with regulating their behaviour and emotions to reduce suspensions for disadvantaged students.<br><br>This includes training for school staff, collaboration with our local behaviour hub and teacher release time. | There is evidence to suggest that this support can help students to regulate behaviours and behavioural difficulties:<br>Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (Youth Endowment Fund)<br><br>Early Intervention Foundation's report on adolescent mental health found good evidence that CBT interventions support young people's social and emotional skills and can reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression:<br>Adolescent mental health: A systematic review on the effectiveness of school-based interventions | 4 |
| Appointment of attendance mentors who can work specifically with PA/SA students in developing strong relationships and positive attitudes towards school attendance.<br><br>Staff training and release time to develop and implement procedures. Attendance/support officers will be appointed to improve attendance. | The DfE guidance has been informed by engagement with schools that have significantly reduced persistent absence levels. working together to improve school attendance. | 1, 4 |
| Provision of additional transport from specific postcodes BL1 and BL3 to ensure there alternatives ways to get to school which will reduce the nature of sporadic attendance. | Our context and student voice has indicated difficulties in getting to school following extra interventions such as 'period 6'. Disadvantaged students and parents have indicated their wish to attend but this is affected by access to safe transport.<br><br>Data from internal student voice. | 1,4 |
| PSHE activities which educate students on specific | As well as being essential to keeping children safe this can have a positive | 1, 4, 5 |

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| social issues relevant to their context such as knife crime, radicalisation, and online risks. | impact on wellbeing and education outcomes, including English and maths, when interventions are linked to academic targets. | |
| Contingency fund for acute issues. | Based on our experiences and those of similar schools to ours, we have identified a need to set a small amount of funding aside to respond quickly to needs that have not yet been identified. | All |

**Total budgeted cost: £463,800**

# Part B: Review of the previous academic year

## Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Following a review of the previous academic year, drawing on external and internal data and reviews, the school has concluded the following in its evaluation of the strategy.

Attendance for disadvantaged students improved by 2.2% which halted a relative decline in disadvantaged students and halted a widening gap with national trends to bring school attendance for disadvantaged in line with the national picture. Although a gap still remains against non-disadvantaged students whose attendance also improved in response to whole school initiatives.

Outcomes for students in 2025 were similar in previous years in which disadvantaged students have performed close to average in line with other disadvantaged students. However there is still a gap remaining both against other schools in the locality and nationally in terms of disadvantaged performance. The A8 average points score was 32.5 for disadvantaged students which is below the average for Bolton. However there are individual instances of improved performance for disadvantaged students which show 'green shoots' that strategies are beginning to have an impact. There was significant improvement in the performance of disadvantaged students in RE with almost 10% increase in grades 9-4 and over 15% in grades 9-5. Disadvantaged performance in Mathematics and History at grade 9-4 also showed signs of improvement .

Actions to improve the reading of pupils was recognised in the 2024 Section 5 Ofsted Inspection and these have provided a foundation to improve the reading ability of students which was evidence through improved outcomes for GCSE 9-5 in both English Language and English Literature which included a significant disadvantaged cohort. The achievement of disadvantaged students particularly in English Literature improved with 50% achieving grade 9-4, and some improvement in grade 9-5 also compared with 2024. Nevertheless there remains improvements to be made in early intervention of reading ages to ensure access to the curriculum.

The confidence and resilience of students has improved through a personal development programme which was praised by Ofsted during the 2024 Section 5 Inspection. The improvement in attendance and some outcomes, those students who are considered 'persistently absent' and are more difficult to reach have shown considerable improvement and there was a significant decrease from 43.3% to 43.5% in 2024-25. Similarly the suspensions of disadvantaged students is significantly below the national average in 2023-24 (2024-25 data not available yet) nevertheless a disadvantaged students is twice as likely to be suspended as a non-disadvantaged student, therefore there is still work to be done in implementing strategies which support disadvantaged students in their wellbeing and resilience to make good choices in school and self-regulate their behaviour.

Based on this information we feel that at present we are not on course to achieve fully the ambitions and targets we have set for disadvantaged students by 2026. Our evaluation indicates that some of the strategies implemented were not robust enough. However the school has undergone considerable changes and instability in its senior

leadership team over the past 12 months which have limited the effectiveness of these strategies. Moreover a new Headteacher, two Deputy Headteachers, a Senior Assistant Headteacher and three new Assistant Headteachers have all been appointed in the past 12 months. As a result the Pupil Premium Strategy 2023-26 is no longer reflective of the ambitions of the new senior leadership team's ambition for disadvantaged students at the school. Therefore the Pupil Premium Strategy has been reviewed and revised under the new senior leadership team and the strategy detailed above reflects a new strategy which will be in place from 2025-28.

## Externally provided programmes

| Programme | Provider |
|---|---|
| Lexonic Reading Programme (£2,000) | Lexonic |