

Pupil Premium Strategy statement – St. Michael's Catholic Academy

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium funding **for the 2026 to 2027 academic year** 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	885
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	32%
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)	Year 2 – mid plan
Date this statement was published	October 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2027
Statement authorised by	Mrs Clare Humble
Pupil premium lead	Mrs Clare Humble
Governor / Trustee lead	Mary Tate

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£333,300
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (<i>enter £0 if not applicable</i>)	£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>	£333,300

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

St. Michael's Catholic Academy is made up of students from very varied and diverse social and economic backgrounds. Students attend the academy from Billingham, Norton, Hartlepool, Wynyard and Wolviston amongst other areas. Although we serve a diverse student body, we are an inclusive and cohesive community living out our call to:

"Act justly, love tenderly, walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8)

The words of the Prophet Micah are at the heart of all we do. The prophet Micah is known for the courageous way he spoke out to the leaders of his time about the grave injustices that had been created in their society. At St. Michael's our mission is founded on creating a just and fair community for all the students and families that we serve. We are very aware of '*The Principle of Cumulative Advantage*' which states:

"...once a social agent gains a small advantage over other agents,
that advantage will compound over time into an increasingly larger advantage."

Our school systems are set up to give all disadvantaged pupils the additional support needed to have the same 'advantage' as their non-disadvantaged peers and hence, achieve their potential with respect to academic measures; to enable them to develop personal virtues that will allow them to contribute fully to the local communities in which they live and to develop an appetite for excellence in all that they do.

The first step on the journey to ensuring the best outcomes for our disadvantaged students is to ensure their attendance in school. In 2019, the attendance of our disadvantaged cohort was just 0.2% below the national figure for this cohort. This has been our greatest battle for our disadvantaged students since the covid closures. Whilst we have seen improvement over the last three academic years, improving attendance continues to be of paramount importance, when students are in school, the data shows that we can impact them by improving their outcomes.

Underpinning our attendance strategy, we have a strong pastoral system which allows our students to overcome potential barriers to learning. Our broad range of wider strategies help us to identify barriers to learning for disadvantaged students and put in place support to enable students to overcome these. With a particular focus on supporting attendance, we have an attendance strategy that is based on pastoral leaders making daily absence calls to contact parents, particularly for disadvantaged students. This personal approach has helped us to build stronger and more trusting relationships with our families. The pastoral team have fortnightly Inclusion meetings,

KS3 and then KS4 alternatively, to ensure that no student is left behind or overlooked as absence is often a symptom of other school-based barriers. All staff within the school have completed EBSA level1 training as part of the attendance strategy.

High-quality first teaching, tailored to the needs of all students, is a central tenet of the strategy for narrowing the gap for disadvantaged students. The 'stmics' pedagogy is a specifically structured pedagogy, which is research based, to explicitly support disadvantaged pupils. This involves targeted seating plans with effective bespoke strategies, both general and subject specific, designed to remove barriers for individual students. Other examples of this include priority marking and corresponding check-ins and targeted questioning for disadvantaged students. Seating plans contain reading ages to help remove any barriers related to individual student literacy needs. By focusing on the needs of the individual child through general teaching provision, offering challenge and support, and additional interventions, if necessary, we can ensure that disadvantaged students have the best opportunities for academic success.

Improving outcomes for students also uses homework to help to consolidate learning. To ensure that disadvantaged students are not disadvantaged in any way, homework has been 'poverty proofed' and quality assured across KS3 to ensure all students can access the work no matter what their background or circumstance. Homework club runs two nights per week, Monday and Wednesday, to ensure that disadvantaged students have access to adult support to help them with homework.

Targeted academic support, for example, through specific, tailored literacy and reading interventions, helps us to improve levels of literacy and reading so that disadvantaged students can achieve in line with their peers. To support students with reading in KS3, we offer phonics, reciprocal reading, DEAR and a reading mentor scheme. Regarding numeracy, foundational knowledge has been built into the new maths programmes of work from Y7, and a broader numeracy strategy has been implemented over the last academic year.

Careful tracking is used to measure how well our disadvantaged students are doing. Through having robust data analysis of outcomes such as GCSE attainment and progress, student attendance, behaviour points, safeguarding concerns, engagement in wider opportunities and from option choices students make at the end of KS3 and KS4, we can ensure all students can fulfil their academic and social ambitions.

"If you treat an individual as he is, he will remain how he is.

*But if you treat him as if he were what he ought to be and could be,
he will become what he ought to be and could be."*

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Challenges

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

Challenge	Detail of challenge
1. Attendance	The attendance data for the last 3 years show that there has been a relative improvement year-on-year compared to national figures from 23/24 and 24/25 in disadvantaged students' attendance. In 2018/19 attendance for this cohort was almost in line with the attendance of disadvantaged pupils nationally however, the impact of covid closures has taken the greatest amount of time to improve the attendance of our disadvantaged students. Our attendance tracking highlights an important opportunity: while overall attendance has been strong since starting the academic year 25/26, some of our disadvantaged students do face additional barriers that impact their ability to attend regularly. We know that consistent attendance is especially crucial for these students, as it directly influences their academic outcomes and overall well-being. Some disadvantaged students need additional support to get to school and start the day with a positive, welcoming experience; other disadvantaged students need a trusted adult, like a "school parent" to advocate for their needs and support them through challenges.
2. Outcomes in maths	Year on year outcomes in maths at 4+ and 5+ have been either close to, or below, national disadvantaged outcomes. Summer 2026 saw significant improvements in maths outcomes for disadvantaged pupils at both 4+ to 54% (13.7% increase from 2025) and at 5+ maths to 38% (17.1% increase from 2025). In year 2 of this plan, we want to sustain this progress as a minimum and want to build on these results to further improve outcomes in maths at 4+ and 5+ for our disadvantaged students.
3. Outcomes in English	Year on year outcomes in English at 4+ and 5+ have been either close to or occasionally below national disadvantaged outcomes. Results for 2024 saw this gap narrowing rapidly for 4+ English for disadvantaged students. In 2024, the gap at 5+ for disadvantaged students in English was narrowing and close to national average. In year 2 of this plan, we want to ensure that outcomes in English at 4+ and 5+ are above national for the disadvantaged cohort.
4. Literacy both reading and oracy	Our reading assessments identify that some disadvantaged students have lower reading ages and proficiency than their peers. Collectively, 1,998 months of reading progress was achieved last academic year with our disadvantaged students in Y7, Y8 and Y9. We want to ensure that we can improve on this in year 2 of the plan.

	Some of our disadvantaged students lack self-esteem and can take a passive approach to learning and contribute less to class discussions. In year 2 of the plan, we will embed further explicit opportunities for oracy into learning for students to build this confidence. Also, in year 2 of the plan, we will further engage with the 'Speak Out Challenge' to develop the confidence of our disadvantaged students.
5. Homework completion & full participation in school,	Analysis of data from external exams, shows that students who complete homework regularly achieve a grade higher across a range of subjects, than their peers who do not complete homework. In year 2 of the plan, we will give opportunities to students to develop their perseverance with homework and to continue to develop their understanding of the importance of completing homework.
6. Parental engagement	Some parents of disadvantaged students need additional opportunities to engage with the academy to understand how to effectively support their child's achievement.
7. Careers advice & guidance	Disadvantaged students, including high prior attainers, can have barriers that prevent them from achieving excellence and lack positive role models to encourage them. They need additional careers support to find a fulfilling pathway. They can lack the opportunities for cultural capital that non-disadvantaged students experience. Disadvantaged students need to compete with their non-disadvantaged peers and achieve a set of qualifications that help them to be ambitious for their own next steps. In year 2, we will continue to offer high level careers guidance, college and work-related opportunities to students, to ensure all disadvantaged students, with a particular focus on disadvantaged girls, are all on a sustainable pathway post16.

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. We are entering year 2 of our 3-year plan.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Improved attendance through specific targeted support,	Increase DS attendance and reduce DS persistent absenteeism.

mentoring and pastoral support systems Targeted Academic Support Wider Strategies	• Identification of attendance patterns through analysis of year groups to reduce barriers to attendance • PLM focus on DS student attendance and needs, building positive relationships with parents/carers • Daily “We missed you” conversations – positive reinforcement for students and thankyou to parents with improving attendance • SLT year group link meetings with DS students at risk of persistent absenteeism weekly • ‘Keep up’ intervention from teachers reduces the impact of poor attendance on outcomes • Timely communication and intervention with parents • Fully embedded Attendance curriculum ensuring all students know why attendance is important. • Fortnightly Inclusion meetings with pastoral leaders
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Improved student engagement and ability to take part in all aspects of school life. To support students through the challenges they face with barriers to learning. To enable students to be successful and build up their resilience, confidence and motivation Teaching Targeted Academic Support Wider Strategies	• A clear intent to ensure the inclusion of all students to have a positive and equitable educational experience, which includes the RAG rating of vulnerable and DS students, to enable staff to support their individual needs. • SLT and Pastoral Mentors advocate for pupils and support with homework, catch up, praise, rewards etc • Use of the 'Pre-loved Shop' for uniform, equipment, revision guides, sanitary products etc • Food ingredients and materials for art and technology provided • CPD informs all staff about our students and their needs • Disadvantaged students can attend homework club in the LRC for support with homework • Disadvantaged students achieve positive behaviour points in line with their peers and are as engaged in the academy's Culture of Excellence as their non-disadvantaged peers. • Disadvantaged students are equally as well represented in the academy's 'Culture of Excellence' as their other peers. • Disadvantaged students are well supported by the well-being team. • Disadvantaged students are happy to use the Breakfast club if they wish to
Improved student engagement and ability to take part in all aspects of school life. Ensure students who struggle with self-regulation can learn to manage behaviours effectively Teaching Targeted Academic Support	• All teachers use 'stmsics' pedagogy in their classrooms to ensure that all pupils, and particularly disadvantaged students, have a clear learning framework to support them as learners. • Positive behaviour points increase towards being in line with non-disadvantaged students • Referrals for Disadvantaged students to internal isolation are reduced • Intervention from pastoral mentors and SLT in Year 11 to catch up with homework and coursework

Wider Strategies	• CPD programmes for staff on strategies for identifying need and responding through adaptive teaching • Continuous positive reinforcement of expectations through Holistic Development curriculum, use of PREP and “catching pupils being good” approach.
Developing curricular opportunities for students to develop literacy, oracy and numeracy skills to ensure they have success in their learning as well as building self-confidence and self-esteem. Teaching Targeted Academic Support	• Increased reading ages and increased progress in literacy for DS students to bring them in line with peers and ensure they can access the curriculum • Disadvantaged students are prioritised for increased opportunities for oracy in the classroom through questioning and accountable talk (A B C strategy) • Incorporate strategies from the Voice21 collaboration and Speak Out Challenge into the general student experience • Systematic use of whiteboards ensures full participation • CPD training on oracy enables to teachers to use effective methods • Departmental marking with formative feedback is prioritised for disadvantaged students first • Access and attendance to literacy and numeracy interventions are prioritised for disadvantaged students

Effective communication and active engage with parents to increase aspirations Wider Strategies	• Strong attendance at Parents' Evenings and Parents' Information Evenings and Parents' Revision Tips evenings through individual invitations from pastoral and senior leaders • Ensuring all disadvantaged parents/ carers have the Arbor app. • Social Media reach and engagement through Facebook and the school website highlights the successes of disadvantaged students alongside their non-disadvantaged peers • Use of text messages for more effective low-key communication with key families • Building stronger relationships with families, enabling them to get access to resources, early help and other external agencies. • PLM's and support staff prioritise Parents' Evening appointments for PP students
An exciting and diverse curriculum for all students which interests them and challenges high prior attainers to aim high Teaching Targeted Academic Support Wider Strategies	• Broad, ambitious curriculum where students have equal access to qualifications including EBACC • Disadvantaged students to achieve equally with national non-disadvantaged peers. • Whole school CPD and the use of assessment reviews to identify gaps for disadvantaged students • Focus on disadvantaged students' attainment and progress is built into all Curriculum planning, delivery and quality assurance • Positive discrimination for questioning and feedback • Prioritised for a wide range of intervention • Removing barriers for attending revision sessions
A careers programme which helps students explore their dreams and aspirations to find a pathway to their future	• Disadvantaged students prioritised for more Careers interviews, trips to universities and colleges and careers events. • Disadvantaged students may access additional college visit experiences to ensure they are fully aware of all opportunities post16 • Additional support to be given to secure work experience placements for disadvantaged students

Wider Strategies	- Monitoring and tracking of destinations show strong %age of disadvantaged students in post-16 education - NEET performance for disadvantaged and vulnerable students shows there are very low numbers of disadvantaged students that are NEET - Holistic development programme has modules in confidence and aspirations for life
A wide offer of enrichment experiences, trips and events to widen students' horizons and support the building of their cultural capital Wider Strategies	- Strong participation through targeted attendance in exam preparation and enrichment activities. - Audit of the curriculum demonstrates how cultural capital is in every subject and everyone benefits - Educational visits and guest speakers from a range of backgrounds - Targeted participation in masterclasses, pupil parliament, debating opportunities - Financial support to go on retreat programmes and spiritual/liturgical experiences and any trips - Targeted opportunities to visit the theatre, book shops, Billingham Library etc - Universal events and trips ensure that everyone can participate - Data and registers of attendance reviewed and evaluated.

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: £ 30,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Focus throughout the year in staff CPD on the early identification of	"Ensuring that all students have strong literacy and numeracy skills is crucial for addressing educational inequities.	2, 3 & 4

concerns regarding all four foundational skills.	Students who struggle with these foundational skills are at a higher risk of falling behind academically and facing long-term challenges. By prioritizing literacy and numeracy education and providing targeted support, educators can help bridge gaps and provide all students with the opportunities they need to succeed.” <i>The Education School.</i>	
High Quality First Teaching	All research shows that developing cognitive and metacognitive strategies within the classroom, has a significant impact upon progress, attainment and self-confidence. High Quality Teaching – EEF “The best available evidence indicates that great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve pupil attainment. Ensuring every teacher is supported in delivering high-quality teaching is essential to achieving best outcomes for all pupils, particularly the most disadvantaged among them.” Teaching and Learning Toolkit - EEF	2, 3, 4 & 5
Key staff delivering phonics. Staff training on Reading Comprehension Strategies	Phonics has a positive impact overall (+5 months) with very extensive evidence and is an important component in the development of early reading skills, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. (EEF)	4
Deployment of key staffing & roles to drive and fulfil PP strategy	“Offer more sustained and intensive support where needed.” EEF Report – Working with Parents to support Children’s Learning	1,2,3,4,5,6 & 7
Retention of School Librarian post	“The benefits of having a funded and staffed school library have been proven across the world, with school libraries having a positive impact upon attitude, well-being, academic outcomes and improved literacy.” - School Libraries Association Report 2012	4

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

Budgeted cost: £60,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
1-to-1 English support: To include: Targeted support from the AHT for Reading Targeted support from English staff	<i>EEF Teacher's Toolkit</i> – high impact for moderate cost “One to one tuition offers greater levels of interaction and feedback compared to whole class teaching which can support pupils to spend more time on new or unfamiliar, overcome barriers to learning and increase their progress through the curriculum.”	3 & 4
Reading support via: - Phonics - Reciprocal Reading - DEAR - Reading mentors	“The average impact of reading comprehension strategies is an additional seven months’ progress over the course of a year. Successful approaches are carefully tailored to pupils’ reading capabilities. Texts should provide an effective, but not overwhelming, challenge.” <i>EEF Teacher's Toolkit – Reading Comprehension Strategies</i>	4
1-to-1 maths support Small group maths teaching using the Trust Director for maths and additional maths Tutor to deliver.	<i>EEF Teacher's Toolkit</i> – high impact for moderate cost “One to one tuition offers greater levels of interaction and feedback compared to whole class teaching which can support pupils to spend more time on new or unfamiliar, overcome barriers to learning and increase their progress through the curriculum.”	2
Tracker to forensically use progress and attainment data at KS4 across all subjects	EEF Teacher's Toolkit – very high impact for very low cost	2 & 3

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

Budgeted cost: £243,300

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Employment of a full-time Attendance Officer and Attendance Administrator	Research has found that poor attendance is linked to poor academic attainment across all stages (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; London et al., 2016) as well as antisocial characteristics, delinquent activity and negative behavioural outcomes (Gottfried, 2014; Baker, Sigmon, & Nugent, 2001). However, evidence suggests that small improvements in attendance can lead to meaningful impacts for these outcomes.	1
EBSA practitioner and base. L1 EBSA training for all new staff to the school	“Regular school attendance is critically important for children’s education, well-being and life prospects, but there is a downward trend in attendance rates for enrolled pupils in England and internationally. For a substantial number of children, persistent absenteeism is related to EBSA. The reasons behind the rise in EBSA are multifaceted and there is compelling evidence that the pandemic and its sequelae have acted to amplify known risk factors. We need more accessible, resource-efficient interventions that can be delivered at scale as part of a multi-sectoral approach to tackling the rising toll of absenteeism.” British Medical Journal <i>Perfect Storm: EBSA in the post Covid 19 pandemic</i>	1, 6 & 7
ELSA practitioner and ELSA emotional support programme	“. . . provide one-on-one or small group sessions to help students recognize, understand, and manage	1

	their emotions, develop social skills, and cope with life challenges.” EEF view: “Social and emotional learning approaches have a positive impact, on average, of 3 months’ additional progress in academic outcomes over the course of an academic year.”	
Updated Holistic Development & RSHE curriculum	“...the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life” by giving pupils knowledge “that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships” (DFE Statutory Guidance).	7
Accelerated Reader program	“The study found that Year 7 pupils who were offered Accelerated Reader made 3 months’ additional progress in reading compared to other similar pupils. For pupils eligible for free school meals the figure was 5 months’ additional progress.” AR Project Evaluation - EEF Accelerated Reader has been shown to have an impact on improving reading in National data collections.	4
Life Coach/ School Counsellor	“Evidence suggests that children from disadvantaged backgrounds have on average, weaker SEL skills at all ages than their more affluent peers. These skills are likely to influence a range of outcomes for pupils: lower SEL skills are linked with poorer mental health and lower academic attainment.” EEF SEL approaches. “Offer more sustained and intensive support where needed.” EEF Report – Working with Parents to support Children’s Learning	1, 2, 3, 4 & 6
Alternative Provision	“Good alternative provision is that which appropriately meets the needs of pupils which required its use and enables them to achieve good educational attainment on par with	1, 4 & 6

	their mainstream peers. All pupils must receive a good education, regardless of their circumstances or the settings in which they find themselves.” Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance – January 2013	
Supporting costs for enrichment	" There is a clear indirect link between enrichment and attendance. Enrichment has a proven impact on various positive factors like mental and physical health and wellbeing, positive relationships, learning and development, confidence and a sense of belonging – all of which are also proven to be associated with higher school attendance.” Beyond the Classroom - Centre for Young Lives - <i>February 2025</i>	1, 5 & 7
Costs to support PP breakfast club and uniforms and revisions guides	“There is a belief in some countries that school uniform supports the development of a whole school ethos and therefore supports discipline and motivation. Some also believe that a uniform promotes social equity.” EEF T&L Toolkit – School Uniform	1 & 5

Total budgeted cost: £333,300

Part B: Review of the previous academic year (2025-2026)

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Disadvantaged students to achieve equally with national non- disadvantaged peers

Building on the previous 3-year plan, improving attainment for disadvantaged students in line with disadvantaged students' attainment nationally, has shown strong improvement in 2026. The Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils in the academy is on a strong 3 year upward trend:

	2024	2025	2026
School	31.7	32.9	35.8

National	34.6	34.9	N/A
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There has been strong improvement in the basic maths & English 4+ measure for disadvantaged students in summer 2026:

Eng & Maths 4+ (Disadvantaged)

Year	National **	Similar School *	St Michael's
2026	NA	42.50%	49%
2025	43.80%	44.10%	32.80%
2024	43.40%	40.90%	29.30%

There has been strong improvement in the basic maths & English 5+ measure for disadvantaged students in summer 2026:

Eng & Maths 5+ (Disadvantaged)

Year	National **	Similar School *	St Michael's
2026	NA	25.1%	25.0%
2025	25.8%	25.3%	13.4%
2024	25.8%	24.8%	24.1%

Attendance

Raising attendance through specific targeted support, mentoring and pastoral support systems.

The 3-year trend from the last PP strategy had shown some improvement in Disadvantaged pupils' overall absence and disadvantaged pupils' persistent absenteeism rates. By the end of academic year 2025/26:

- Disadvantaged absence was at 12.8% (national 13.2%) compared to 6.1% for other pupils (national 6.4%) with absence for both disadvantaged and other pupils slightly lower than their national counterparts.
- 42% of disadvantaged pupils (3% above national figure of 39%) had persistent absence compared to 17% of other pupils (1% above national figure of 16%).
- Disadvantaged absence from academic year 2024/25 was 16.8% (national 14.0%) compared to 6.9% for other pupils (national 6.9%). **This is an improvement of 4% for Disadvantaged absence over the academic year.**
- In academic year 2024/25, Disadvantaged absence was 2.8% higher than their national counterparts whereas absence for other pupils was in line with their national counterparts. **In academic year 2025/26, Disadvantage absence was 0.4% lower than national counterparts.**

- The percentage of Disadvantaged pupils that were PA dropped by 8% and we closed the gap on the national figure by 4%.

Further plans are in place to tackle disadvantaged students' persistent absenteeism rates through the PP strategy this academic year, with a particular focus on the attendance of female PP students.

Careers

Fulfilling potentials through a careers programme which helps our students explore their dreams and aspirations to find a pathway to their future

Careers experience highlights from the academic year 2025/26:

- **Catalyst Oxford University programme** specifically targeted high-attaining disadvantaged students.
- 100% disadvantaged student trip participation in the **Middlesbrough Football Club Careers Fair** (30 students).
- **Year 9 Infinity Project with Tees Active** delivered employability skills development for disadvantaged students.
- **Year 8 and Year 9 MyBigCareer mock interviews** prioritised students identified as at risk of becoming NEET.
- Additional personalised support provided by the Careers Lead to help disadvantaged students secure Year 10 work experience placements.
- 100% of disadvantaged Year 11 students completed a **careers guidance interview**, with further tailored support available through K. Wilkinson (SBC).
- All Year 10 students completed a careers guidance interview by July 2026, enabling targeted follow-up support for disadvantaged students in Year 11.
- 100% of disadvantaged Year 10 students attended **at least three post-16 provider visits** in June 2026.
- 100% of Year 10 students completed a work experience placement.
- Some disadvantaged Year 11 students attended additional post-16 college transition and open events, accompanied by the SENCo, Keyworkers, C. Rea or K. Wilkinson, to provide personalised guidance, support informed decision-making, and ensure successful progression pathways.

Strong destination outcomes demonstrate the impact of targeted support for disadvantaged students.

- In 2025, **22 disadvantaged students received additional support** from Stockton Borough Council resulting in **100% securing a post-16 destination**.
- In 2026, **33 students received enhanced support** from Stockton Borough Council.
- Of the **62 disadvantaged (Pupil Premium) students in Year 11**, **60 had secured a confirmed post-16 destination**, with **K. Wilkinson continuing intensive support with the remaining two students** to ensure sustained participation in education, employment or training.

Analysis of sustained destination and participation data indicates that a continued focus on Pupil Premium (PP) girls is required. As a result, this has been identified as an **implementation**

target for 2026-27. Progress will be monitored through the development of foundational career skills, engagement with Careers education, and participation in targeted careers and employer encounters designed to raise aspirations, build confidence, and support successful post-16 progression.

The school employs a Level 6 Careers Adviser for 2 days per week to interview students and support the Careers provision already offered through school. Students are closely tracked and our careers advisor Chris Rea collates this information. This is a process that has proved successful in tracking our students. RONI, disadvantage and SEND students are all highlighted to ensure they are given priority support and access to the Careers Adviser. We also have Katie Wilkinson from the Local Authority Careers team, who attends to meets with RONI/DS students to ensure they secure post 16 provisions.

All students received assemblies from post-16 organisations, Apprenticeship information and there were small additional activities for subject specific areas, such as Science, Health & Social Care and High Achievers.

Creating safe, inclusive spaces for students who face significant challenges in their lives to have their basic needs met

Since the start of this PP Strategy in academic year 2025/26, the following provision for supporting students to get into school and then to focus on being able to learn in the classroom have been used.

Alliance mental health services: 37 students were triaged as suitable for Alliance support and 17 of these were disadvantaged students (46%).

School Life Coach/ counsellor: This role has been in place throughout the last 3-year PP strategy and is an integral and invaluable part of our student support provision. The students who have accessed this support share very positive feedback about what it has meant for them. Metrics for impact can be difficult to measure other than that it has often been instrumental in ensuring the student has a trusted adult that they can rely on. 33 students have accessed this support of which 18 were disadvantaged students (55%).

ELSA practitioner: This role was brought in in the second year, 23/24, of the last strategy. Again, as a further emotional support for some of our students, we have seen increased levels of attendance and engagement with most students that have been through and graduated from this program. 23 students have accessed this of which 5 were disadvantaged students (21.7%).

The academy also had 104 other students for whom successful referrals were made for to a wide range of other agencies ranging from CAMHS to Daisy Chain to the Bungalow Project and Eastern Ravens to name but a few. Of these further 104 referrals, 52 of these students were disadvantaged students (50%).

Breakfast Club: This runs daily from 8.00am in the Dining Hall and LRC and is regularly attended by 40-50 students daily. This club is an inclusive and safe space and is used by a broad spectrum of students from all year groups, who are respectful and caring towards each other. It offers many of these students the opportunity to get something to eat at the start of the day and an opportunity for the member of staff on duty to welcome the students in to school.

PP Enrichment analysis against Enrichment Benchmarks (established June 2026)

- Participation in enrichment activities is high across all groups, with 97.4% of Pupil Premium (PP) students and 96.3% of RONI students engaging in at least one enrichment opportunity, compared to 98.9% of students overall.

- PP students demonstrate particularly strong engagement in civic and life experiences, with 79.9% participating in civic activities and 90.8% taking part in life experiences, ensuring broad exposure to activities that develop character, employability and social capital.
- RONI students also show strong participation in key enrichment strands, with 80.0% involved in civic activities and 89.6% in life experiences, highlighting the success of targeted approaches in engaging vulnerable learners.
- Year 7 provides especially strong evidence of inclusive participation, with 98.2% of PP students and 100% of RONI students accessing enrichment opportunities. PP students also achieved high participation rates in arts (92.7%), nature (90.9%) and sports (85.5%).
- **Year 8 PP students continue to engage widely across the enrichment offer**, with almost all students participating in arts (93.9%), civic (93.9%) and life experiences (95.5%), demonstrating equitable access to the wider curriculum.
- **Year 9 PP students maintain very strong participation in high-value enrichment activities**, particularly nature-based experiences (82%) and life experiences (90%), supporting the development of wider skills and aspirations.
- In Year 10, 100% of PP and RONI students accessed enrichment opportunities, matching the participation rate of the year group as a whole and reflecting the school's commitment to maintaining engagement during a key transition year.

The data indicates that disadvantaged and RONI students are consistently accessing a broad range of enrichment experiences across all year groups, particularly within civic, life and nature activities. This demonstrates that targeted support is successfully reducing barriers to participation and ensuring that vulnerable students benefit from opportunities that build confidence, resilience and future readiness.

Planning an exciting and diverse curriculum for all students which interests them and challenges our pupils to aim high

Over the last 3 years of the previous PP Strategy, the school has worked hard to develop a Culture of Excellence. This was developed using research from Rob Coe about how to create a successful culture in school. This has enabled us to build our own St. Michael's culture of celebrating success where students are proud to achieve display a 'have a go' attitude. It has also helped to develop students' confidence in communicating about their learning. This success is then shared with the school community through social media posts and with parents via student certificates.

Two main strands of the Culture of Excellence are our Curriculum Champions and Virtues Awards winners. Year on year, the number of disadvantaged students awarded the Curriculum Champion award has increased so that they are represented proportionately, and we are delighted to have seen the way in which disadvantaged students have really valued this acknowledgement both in school and the opportunity to share this with their families at home. In the academic year 25/26:

- **185 Pupil Premium students have been awarded a curriculum champion (34.1%) (9.1% higher than in 24-25)**
- **56 students who are SEND and PP have been awarded a curriculum champion award. (10.3%) (3.3% higher than in 24-25)**
- **Overall, 43.6 % of students awarded the Curriculum Champion award were SEND/PP (0.8% higher than in 24-25)**

Virtues Awards are based on students using our school virtues in their learning and school life. These virtues include confidence, resilience, respect and self-belief to name just some. In the academic year 26/26:

- **111 Pupil Premium students have been awarded a Virtue Award 40.8% (21.7% higher compared to 24-25)**
- **44 students who are SEND and PP have been awarded the Virtue Award. (16.1%) (6.9% higher compared to 24-25)**
- **Overall, 47.7% of students awarded the Virtues Award were SEND/PP. (30% higher compared to 24-25)**

The Culture of Excellence allows students to showcase work that they themselves are particularly proud on at our '*What Went Well Wednesday*' celebration each week. Students complete a Learning Passport where they collect 12 stickers, one from each subject area, and when their passport is complete, this can be traded in for a voucher reward. This relies on sustained commitment by the student to achieve high academic standards and be motivated to keep striving for excellence in their learning. In academic year 25/26:

- **42 Pupil Premium students have completed a learning passport 24% (9.3% higher compared to 2024/25)**
- **14 Students who are SEND and PP have completed their learning passport 8% (0.15% higher compared to 2024/25)**
- **Overall, 36% of students have completed a learning passport were SEND/ PP (6.6% higher compared to 2024/25)**

As the academy has developed student leadership opportunities, these have been designed to ensure that students can have a real feeling of belonging and efficacy within the school. Ensuring that disadvantaged students are as likely as their non-disadvantaged peers to take leadership roles, has been an important foundation of the student leadership process.

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
Sparx Maths support & homework program	Hegarty/ Sparx maths
Life to the Full RSE program	Ten: Ten Resources
Educake Science/History program	Educake Education
Accelerated Reader	Renaissance Learning
Unifrog Careers program	Unifrog, the universal destinations platform

Service pupil premium funding (optional)

For schools that receive this funding, you may wish to provide the following information: **How our service pupil premium allocation was spent last academic year**

The impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils