

Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium for the 2025 to 2026 academic year, funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Robert Smyth Academy
Number of pupils in school	1349
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	10%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3 year plans are recommended)	2025/2026- 2027/2028
Date this statement was published	November 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	October 2026 – the strategy is reviewed yearly.
Statement authorised by	Dan Cleary
Pupil premium lead	Kate Nicholson
Governor / Trustee lead	Sam Roach

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£113,640
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	N/A
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year	N/A

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

Our Pupil Premium strategy is underpinned by a commitment to inclusion. We recognise that socio-economic disadvantage intersects with other barriers such as SEND, social care involvement, and protected characteristics. Our approach ensures early identification of need, high expectations for all, and access to a broad and balanced curriculum. We use a graduated response model and evidence-informed interventions, regularly reviewed for impact. Staff are trained to deliver inclusive teaching and adapt provision to meet individual needs, ensuring every pupil feels they belong and can thrive.

Central to our inclusive approach is the cultivation of strong, positive relationships between staff and pupils. We recognise that trusted relationships are foundational to pupil engagement, well-being and achievement. Teachers and support staff are encouraged to know their pupils well, build rapport, and create safe, respectful learning environments. These relationships foster a sense of belonging and enable pupils to feel valued, understood and supported in their learning journey.

Based on self-evaluation, assessments, and national research, we are focussed on:

- Improving the quality of teaching experienced by all students (including disadvantaged)
- Improving the reading age of disadvantaged students
- Improving the attendance of and reducing persistent absence for disadvantaged students
- Improving the engagement of disadvantaged students with opportunities outside of the classroom to improve attendance.
- Understanding how students who have experienced trauma in their childhood (adverse childhood experiences) are less likely to attend, behave or achieve in school statistically and how we can support students to overcome these barriers through programmes such as Thrive.

The main vehicle that we use to communicate this to staff at RSA is our '**Front & Centre**' methodology (see Appendix). This document outlines the practices that each teacher and support staff member should adopt for our disadvantaged students, ensuring that they are both literally accessible and figuratively at the front when planning, adapting, or feeding back to students.

Challenges

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

Challenge	Detail of challenge
1	Some children eligible for the Pupil Premium do not read well enough. NGRT data collected in September 2025 states that 47.8% of PP students in years 7-10 do not have a reading age that is consistent with their chronological age, as compared to 16.5% of non-PP students.
2	Our teaching strategies support PP/SEND students but they are not always applied consistently in all lessons.
3	Absence rates for Pupil Premium pupils (FSM6) are above that of non-Pupil Premium children. The higher levels of absence has an impact on their education and causes some students to fall behind in their learning. In 2024-25 attendance rates for PP were 89.7% compared to 94.3% for all students (-4.6%). These figures are equal to national figures and are also impacted by outliers.
4	Disadvantaged students are more likely to receive suspensions than non-disadvantaged students. In 2024-25 PP students has a FTE rate of 38.6% (68.5 days lost) compared to non-Pupil Premium students of 6.2% (67 days lost). Band A students account for 40 of those days with a FTE rate of 104%.
5	Some PP pupils have a range of adverse childhood experiences that affect their performance and attendance at school, causing them to fall behind in their learning. Some pupils have low self-esteem, limited aspirations and a lack of opportunity outside of school. This results in a lack of engagement with extra-curricular activities and opportunities.

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	PP children become confident readers	The standardised reading age of PP children improve to be in line with their chronological reading age.
2	Improve the quality of teaching experienced by PP children	Work scrutiny identifies there is no consistent difference in the work produced by PP students and their peers PP books reflect high-quality education through standards of presentation, work completion, and evidence of progress RPGs indicate that PP students are making at least expected progress To reduce the gap in achievement of Pupil Premium students at GCSE from 8.50

		(7.48) points for average A8 and 28.3 (18.8) points for students attaining 9-4 in English and Maths in this academic year for Year 11 students.
3	Improve the attendance of PP students	PP attendance improves to be in line with their peers (Non-PP attendance figures for this academic year) PP persistent absence falls to be in line with the national average for all secondary age students.
4	Improved attitudes to learning by PP students	The number of days lost by Band A students is reduced to less than an average of 2 per student (2024-5 4 per student).
5	Improve the provision for vulnerable students (those who have experienced adverse childhood experiences) based on level of need. Raise self-esteem and aspirations for all	All students who receive support have an impact score of 3 and above. Pupil premium students receive funded or subsidised access to activities which develop their cultural capital and support their education Improve participation with extra-curricular activities, trips, catch up interventions and/or revision classes to 100% 0% NEET target at the end of each academic year

Activity in this academic year

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

Teaching

Budgeted cost: **£20,460.94**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Use of NGRT tests to enable a baseline assessment to take place in reading.	Tracking key attainment indicators for students. Reinforces data that KS2 SAT data provides and is more focused on reading skills.	1 & 2

	This is reviewed twice yearly when all PP students are tested using the NGRT	
Reading intervention from Literacy Coordinator matched to student needs [based on NGRT data].	EEF toolkit indicates that “reading comprehension” strategies can generate +6 months. EEF toolkit indicates that “oral language interventions” can generate +5 months. This is reviewed twice yearly when all PP students are tested using the NGRT PP students in years 7 & 8 that receive this intervention are targetted following a baseline assessment of Stanine 1-3.	1 & 2
Further enhance Quality First Teaching and curriculum quality (CPD). Focused CPD delivered by SLT on routines, stretch and access.	“Good teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils” EEF	2
To improve the quality of education by securing stronger adaptive teaching and formative assessment so that every child, particularly disadvantaged students, makes excellent progress in all lessons	EEF reports Feedback to have a very high impact for very low cost based on extensive evidence. Quality feedback needs quality formative assessment for feedback to be useful. Dylan Wiliam states ‘Getting teachers to make greater use of minute-by-minute and day-by-day formative assessment is likely to have a greater impact on how much our children learn in schools than anything else’	2
Reduced secondary teacher allocation [max. 43hrs].	Additional time allocated for professional learning and to prioritise feedback for PP students. This links to out Front & Centre approach that asks all teachers of PP students to ensure that there is feedback for the student either verbally during circulation	2 4

	in class or in their books. This extra time allows for planning to take place.	
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Targeted academic support

Budgeted cost: £66,664

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Structured reading and academic interventions [1:1 and small group with LSA/HLTA]	EEF toolkit indicates that “small group tuition” can generate +4 months. EEF toolkit indicates that “one to one tuition” can generate +5 months.	1, 2 & 5
Structured reading interventions from literacy coordinator	EEF toolkit indicates that “small group tuition” can generate +4 months. EEF toolkit indicates that “one to one tuition” can generate +5 months.	1,2 &5
Raising Achievement Meetings with subject teachers to raise awareness of barriers to learning so that teaching can be targeted to meet the needs of PP students.	Good teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils” EEF	1 4
Protected time at tutor time for key curriculum leads to monitor, evaluate and review PP achievement.	Good teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils” EEF	1 4
Pastoral mentoring from inclusion team	EEF evidence suggests that mentoring has a small positive impact on attainment. Some studies have found more positive impacts for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds	3 4
Academic Mentoring from Assistant College Leaders ,including target setting, for targeted PP students following TA1 and TA2 data.	EEF evidence suggests that mentoring has a small positive impact on attainment. Some studies have found more positive impacts for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds	1 2 5
Targeted mentoring for Band A and Band	EEF evidence suggests that mentoring has a small positive impact on attainment. Some	3 4 5

B students	studies have found more positive impacts for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds	
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Wider strategies

Budgeted cost: **£26,791.34**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Attendance strategy [supported by PP coordinator role].	The link between absence and attainment for disadvantaged students is clearly established (DFE Research 2016. Ref: DFE-00089-2016). Actions relate to recommendations including those from The Key for School Leaders (Ref: 9539) and is in line with the DFE Expert report 2012 (Ref: DFE-00036-2012)	3
Assistant College Leaders to oversee and prioritise PP attendance. This will involve meeting weekly with the Attendance Administrator to monitor all students but PP students in particular. They will initiate Attendance contract meetings, make contact with parents/carers conduct home visits and oversee strategies such as attendance challenges for targeted students	The link between absence and attainment for disadvantaged students is clearly established (DFE Research 2016. Ref: DFE-00089-2016). Actions relate to recommendations including those from The Key for School Leaders (Ref: 9539) and is in line with the DFE Expert report 2012 (Ref: DFE-00036-2012)	3
Breakfast provision for vulnerable students.	EEF “Magic Breakfast” research suggests +2 months progress. Wellbeing provision to support most vulnerable students.	2 3 4 5
Thrive Training for key support staff (CPD)	EEF toolkit indicates that “behaviour interventions [strand 3]” can generate +3 months.	3 4 5

	EEF toolkit indicates that “social and emotional learning” can generate +4 months.	
Whole school ‘Routines’ training (embedded through the behaviour policy and routines).	EEF improving behaviour in schools guidance report Improving behaviour in schools	4
Thrive practitioners to support students where behaviours have led to higher level sanctions	EEF improving behaviour in schools guidance report Improving behaviour in schools (specifically supporting the EMR approach).	4
Trip funding and subsidised / funded enrichment activities (e.g. music tuition).	EEF toolkit indicates that “physical activity” can generate +1 month. EEF toolkit indicates that “arts participation” can generate +3 month.	5
Support with uniform costs and academic supplies such as revision guides	To ensure that students are not disadvantaged in comparison to peers, which could negatively impact upon self esteem	2 5
Careers advisor – all PP students have one personalised external interview per year	DFE guidance states that ‘high quality careers education and guidance in school or college is critical to young people’s futures.’	5
Disadvantaged Committee Meetings (twice each year) to monitor and review PP provision. This will include executive and non-executive governance	Governance has a responsibility for ensuring that PP spending is targeted at the right pupils and has an impact on their learning and outcomes.	1 2 3 4 5

Total budgeted cost: £113,916.09

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the 2024 to 2025 academic year.

Pupil Premium Children become Confident Readers

Research suggests that students vulnerable to disadvantage are more likely to be behind. We also know that PP progress in English, as measured by P8, was negative

We tested all Year 7 and 8 PP students last year and interventions have continued this year with our Literacy Coordinator, at the end of 2025 the following was the case:

25 PP (23% of all PP students) students attended intervention (yrs 7-10)

21 students (84% of PP students who attended these interventions, which was a 21% increase on number of PP students who attended last year) increased their RA

3 students increased to CRA (chronological reading age)

1 student increased RA to between 6 months and CRA

4 students increased RA to between 12 months and CRA

The impact score (a Trust wide agreed measure of impact and value for money) for reading interventions (Phonics and Rapid Plus) were between 1-1.5 for cost and 2.92-3 for impact. This translates to cost effective and solid impact

Subject-based reading strategies are in place across the school - evidenced via climate walks and discussions with curriculum leaders in link meetings.

A number of PP students are regularly engaging with their library in their own time, last year (2024/25) 27 PP students have library badges (18% of all library badge holders). This year 21 PP students regularly use the library at social time

Improve the Quality of Teaching

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is excellent with frequent exemplary practice. The quality of teaching has improved over time, and when PP student progress is identified as not rapid enough staff are made aware and interventions are discussed and implemented.

We know from our QA that our Teaching and Learning strategies are having an impact on our students. In our best lessons we identified that our teachers had an excellent climate for learning, clear and effective routines strong checking for understanding, provided opportunity for reflection and prioritised PP students for feedback.

Common strands included:

- Strategic seating
- Regular checking
- Targeted Questioning
- Checking books and prioritising for feedback
- Building relationships (including praise and positive recognition)

Internal Quality Assurance suggests these techniques are embedded in most lessons and are benefiting PP students although there remains a need for greater consistency. Book looks last year suggest that the majority of PP books meet the standard and are of good quality. For most students there is little discernible difference with their peers in terms of tasks set and work attempted. The aim will be to have checking embedded in all lessons.

Student voice

In October 2025 we conducted a student voice for PP students, and they were very clear that when circulating was taking place it was very helpful but that there needed to be greater consistency in this area. They were also grateful for those staff that always checked for their understanding before moving on, but again they said that there was a need for greater consistency in this strategy.

Executive Governance

The Director's Report published in September 2025 stated that, "A strong sense of belonging is clearly embedded in the school culture. This is evident in conversations with pupils during climate walks and lesson visits and Pupil premium". Regarding the leadership of the Pupil Premium strategy the biannual governance visit for disadvantaged students and learning visits "demonstrate[d] strong leadership of Pupil Premium and high-quality provision for the vast majority of pupils."

National Outcomes Overview 2025 (SISRA)

National outcomes data supports the above, with PP students making good progress in English where the gap was positive (+5.5) with non-PP students. The progress 8 score for PP students was -0.27 (all students +0.20), which was slightly down on the previous year (0.02). PP progress for English Language (-0.18) which held steady from previous year (-0.17) whereas in English Literature PP students made positive progress.

- English showed strong achievement for PP students with 93.3% of PP students achieving a grade 9-4.
- The scores for maths were above national average but were lower than in English at 46.7% achieving a grade 9-4 – this area will be our main area of focus for the coming year.
- 80% of PP students entered the EBacc (45% in 2022, 54% in 2023, 74% in 2024)

Internal Data

Last year the headlines were:

- Year 9 – the gap between PP and non-PP students had narrowed since year 7 in both English and maths
- Year 10 – the gap between PP and non-PP students had narrowed since year 8 in all core subjects

3 Improve the attendance of PP students

Our improved PA figure last year was a result of the work the pastoral team put in place to support students with attendance concerns.

There were a number of outlier students that were unable to attend the academy which affected overall attendance for PP students:

3 students who failed to ever attend our C&I unit – Redwood

2 students who have since moved to hospital school and a specialist provision

Attendance is very much related to the degree of disadvantage faced by our students. Band D students attend better than the PP average at 92.2% which is only a 1.2% gap from non-PP students. Our Band A students have more issues outside of school and this is reflected in their school attendance rates that were 11.5% below that of all students, a slight improvement on last year's figures. We focused our attendance strategies on this group of 22 students through the year and will remain a focus for the year 2025/26.

Improve behaviour of students in receipt of Pupil Premium

Whilst most students behave well suspension rates remain too high for PP students. The students who had repeat suspensions were frequently Band A. These students receive extra support to help them deal with difficult situations, including Thrive mentoring but based on this data Band A suspensions are our main area of focus in the coming year.

Improve the provision for vulnerable students (those who have experienced adverse childhood experiences) based on level of need. Raise self-esteem and aspirations for all.

We know that some PP pupils have a range of ACES that can impact on their performance and attendance. Our SEMH manager has coordinated interventions to support these, with our Band A and B students prioritised. This has meant that 95.4% of PP students engaged with extra-curricular participation of some description and 87.7% have engaged with extra-curricular participation that is not a subject intervention. Progress was made in providing support for these students and in ensuring interventions have been recorded. Systems are now in place to ensure that interventions by our SEMH team are recorded with impact criteria developed and scores recorded.

Students in band A and B receive targeted Thrive mentoring throughout their time at RSA and this is both consistent and also reactive to their level of need. Our internal monitoring system shows that the impact of this intervention is positive and sustained.

We also provide a breakfast club for all PP students and this is very well attended ensuring that students have a good start to each day, with the SEMH manager present to provide support and nurture to those students who require it.

In year 11 we are keen to maximise the opportunities for PP students outside their timetable and so we offer PP students mentoring with 6th form student once a week in both English and maths. These schemes are very well attended and students are positive about their support and impact.

Overall

The Pupil Premium strategy has been seen to have real impact in several areas. Successes have included:

- Sustained attendance during a time when attendance rates have been falling nationally
- Majority of Pupil Premium students behave well
- Strong progress and attainment in English and English Literature

Despite the progress made we recognise that there is still much work to be done. Attendance rates are still too low and suspensions need to fall for Band A Pupil Premium students. We also recognise that further improvements in the quality of teaching will be our most important lever to improve outcomes for disadvantaged students and close the gap between them and their peers. Some Pupil Premium students also need support to ensure that they become confident readers.

Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
NGRT Testing	NGRT
Thrive Assessment	Thrive

Service pupil premium funding

Measure	Details
How did you spend your service pupil premium allocation last academic year?	N/A
What was the impact of that spending on service pupil premium eligible pupils?	The three service children had an average attendance of 94%

We have 3 service pupil premium students all of whom benefit from the strategies impact on quality first teaching.	Average positive behaviour points 143 Average negative behaviour points 6.3
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Further information

We have engaged with research and support available from professional bodies such as the EEF and The Sutton Trust.

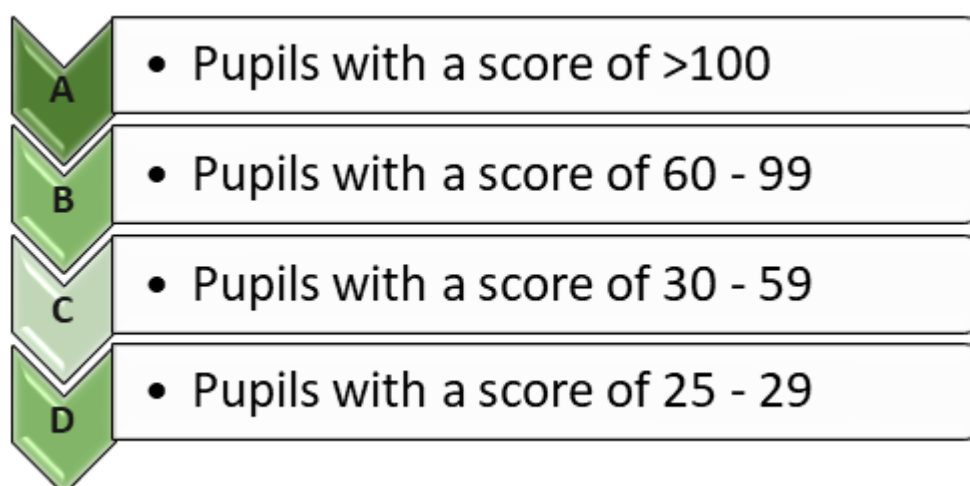
The School Improvement Plan (SIP) and PP plan are aligned and we recognise that any improvements made to the quality of teaching will benefit our disadvantaged learners the most.

Pupil Premium Alert Score

Pupil premium pupils should not be regarded as a homogenous group. Schools must sensitively differentiate and personalise learning to meet need. TGAT has used the research completed by the Education Policy Institute, information from FFT and research commissioned by the DfE (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/748514/Understanding_KS4_LSYPE2_research-report.pdf) to devise a points system based on risk factors that cause toxic stress and can affect pupils' progress. This scoring system enables leaders to effectively allocate resource and ensure the most disadvantaged children are able to access a wide and diverse curriculum that supports their needs and ensures they achieve in line with their more advantaged peers.

Risk Factor	Points
ACES(Adverse childhood experience)	10 each
Other factors causing toxic stress	5 each
FSM for 90% or more of school life	50
FSM for 50% - 89% of school life	30
FSM for less than half school life	25
SEND E	10
SEND K	5
LAC+(more than one placement in an academic year)	30
LAC	20
Post-LAC	20
CP at any time	20
White British	10
Asylum seekers	100
IDACI band 1	15
IDACI band 2	12
IDACI band 3	9
IDACI band 4	6
IDACI band 5-10	3

PP pupils will be allocated an alert score and placed into a disadvantage band.



Banded support for PP students

Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D
Paid Summer School attendance Thrive transitional 6 weeks sessions Named Thrive practitioner allocated Thrive assessment (8-11) ACL attendance monitoring Priority for ACL academic mentoring Priority for ACL attendance challenge EP referral* Book look priority Paid visits and priority Specialist mentor and intervention Free revision guides Free equipment Breakfast allocation per day (£1.45) Targeted for breakfast club Access in all seating plans Front & Centre Careers interview each year PP One Page Profile	Paid Summer School attendance Thrive transitional 6 weeks sessions Named Thrive practitioner allocated Thrive assessment years 8-11 Priority Thrive sessions if required Paid visits and priority Access in all seating plans Priority for ACL attendance challenge Book Look second priority Breakfast allocation per day (£1.45) Targeted for breakfast club Free revision guides Free equipment Front & Centre Careers interview each year PP One Page Profile	Paid Summer School attendance Thrive transitional 6 weeks sessions Thrive assessment if referred Second priority for attendance challenge Book Look third priority Breakfast allocation per day (£1.45) Targeted for breakfast club Free revision guides Free equipment Front & Centre Careers interview each year PP One Page Profile	Paid Summer School attendance Thrive transitional 6 weeks sessions Thrive assessment if referred Third priority for attendance challenge Book Look fourth priority Breakfast allocation per day (£1.45) Targeted for breakfast club Free revision guides Free equipment Front & Centre Careers interview each year PP One Page Profile

Pupil Premium: 'Front & Centre' – What does this mean for teachers?

- **Know your students:**
- Read their profile (A&B) – interpret for your classroom & subject (not yet in circulation)
- Welcome them at the door
- Find out about their interests = build a relationship
- If you need to contact home, always use the phone
- **Consider your seating plan carefully:**
- You must have access to see their work
- Sit by positive influences
- Record adaptation on your messy mark book
- **Employ adaptive teaching:**
- Plan to remove barriers (including lack of equipment)
- Employ consistent and regular formative assessment
- Address misconceptions
- **Target for formative assessment in lessons:**
- Plan how you will check that students have acquired the intended knowledge and skills
- Always check their mini-whiteboard response
- Question PP students every lesson – record on messy mark books
- Target them when circulating the room
- Provide them with feedback that clarifies, consolidates or enhances their understanding
- **Ensure their books meet the standards**
- Regularly refer to the 'Book Expectations' – use the sticker
- Check their books regularly when circulating
- Use your stamp, stickers, a comment to recognise their efforts
- **Positively support catch-up from missed lessons:**
- Keep worksheets so they can be shared easily or use 'absence buddies'

- Facilitate copying work where appropriate
- Report in-school absence promptly
- **Target for praise & recognition – specific about what they’ve done well**
- Be enthusiastic about your subject
- Use the rewards system – PP students should be over-represented in the stats
- **Target for extra-curricular clubs, trips and activities:**
- Go above and beyond to encourage and *specifically invite* to your club, event or trip.
- Speak to KSN about financial support for PP students