

# Pupil premium strategy statement – Valentine Primary School & Nursery

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

## School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	460
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	50%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers ( <b>3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year</b> )	2025-2028
Date this statement was published	January 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	Autumn 2026
Statement authorised by	Daniel Constable-Phelps
Pupil premium lead	Daniel Constable-Phelps
Governor lead	Maria Smyth

## Funding overview – as at January 2026

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£225,491
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years ( <i>enter £0 if not applicable</i> )	£0
<b>Total budget for this academic year</b> <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>	£225,491

# Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

## Statement of intent

At Valentine, we are relentless in our commitment to improving the life chances, achievement and personal development of disadvantaged pupils. We believe that background should never determine outcomes. Every child deserves a rich curriculum, expert teaching and the confidence to flourish.

Our strategy is rooted in evidence, shaped by the Education Endowment Foundation and embedded through the St Mary's Partnership implementation framework. We prioritise high-quality teaching first, because the greatest lever for improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils is consistently strong classroom practice

We use a disciplined cycle of diagnosis, therapy, testing and revisit (DTTR) to turn data into wisdom. Teachers identify precise gaps through diagnostic assessment and question level analysis, respond with targeted teaching and therapies, then check learning through testing and revisiting. This ensures that support is timely, responsive and woven into everyday teaching rather than removed from it

We equip teachers as curriculum experts. Through secure subject knowledge, careful sequencing and explicit modelling, staff build strong foundations so pupils know more, remember more and apply learning with independence. Our practice is aligned to the Partnership's Great Teacher Rubric, which emphasises expert explanation, purposeful questioning, meaningful feedback and planned opportunities to embed learning

For disadvantaged pupils we act with precision and urgency. We:

- prioritise them in planning, grouping and conferencing
- use high-quality whole class teaching as the core entitlement
- deploy targeted academic support and therapies where gaps are identified
- provide wider strategies that remove barriers to attendance, wellbeing and engagement
- ensure every child is known personally, not reduced to a number

We place equal importance on language, oracy and literacy, knowing that vocabulary and communication unlock the wider curriculum. We strengthen mathematical fluency and reasoning through structured practice and talk. In the Early Years, we invest heavily in communication, language and irresistible environments to secure strong starts. Across all phases, we nurture emotional wellbeing and belonging so that pupils feel safe to take risks and succeed.

Implementation is systematic and disciplined. Leaders use clear routines for monitoring, coaching and review. Data conferences, book scrutiny and pupil voice inform next steps. Staff development is ongoing, practical and research-led. This ensures that improvement is sustained and that funding decisions are both evidence-informed and evaluated for impact.

Ultimately, our intent is simple and ambitious:

- disadvantaged pupils achieve at least in line with their peers nationally
- gaps close quickly through expert teaching and timely support
- pupils develop confidence, resilience and aspiration
- every child leaves Valentine ready for the next stage of education and life

- We do not seek quick fixes. We build capability, consistency and culture. Through high expectations, no excuses and whatever it takes, we ensure that disadvantage is never destiny.



## Achieving success for children in difficult circumstances

### Going the extra mile

#### ● Providing and valuing partnerships

- Parents and carers are regularly notified of school information via a weekly newsletter. Delivered in a predictable, accessible format. It details celebration, learning and news
- Raising parental aspirations and support parents in becoming learners themselves
- Supporting our parental community in times of hardship with all available means to aid their challenging circumstances.
- Partnerships are crucial to broadening horizons, such as through charity - like Communicare.

#### ● Focusing on speaking and listening

- A strong curriculum is only life-changing when all children learn to speak and articulate what they know and understand because of it. Vocabulary development drives every subject.
- Learning environments promote literacy for all subjects to ensure that ideas are reinforced to support learning.
- Outdoor learning and experiences outside of the classroom help children to explore and stimulate thinking.
- Poor language comprehension and language use is assessed carefully by our team.



#### ● Broadening pupils' horizons

- Focusing on teaching and learning
- Opportunities to provide a wide range of stimulating activities
- Encouraging pupils to take risks, enjoy learning and to 'give it a go'
- Personalised learning approaches tailored to children and need
- Strong, dynamic leaders who lead from the front, set the tone and establish a culture of 'we can achieve'

#### ● Engagement in learning

- Developing interest through pupil-led feedback.
- Making relevant links between learning and the lives pupils' lead. Building 'future' into the teaching
- Regular paired and group work: exploring ideas, feedback and discussion
- Acting quickly to overcome pupils' difficulties and potential barriers to learning - teachers pivot to engage: role play, rethinking delivery of information
- Technology - planned well - to underpin, enthuse and promote engagement (VR, laptops)

#### ● Managing emotions and feelings

- Recognising that children have low self-esteem and talking openly about how this impact them as a learner
- Ensuring that no excuses are made for children - we know when we do this, the child then learns to make excuses for themselves
- Maintaining high expectations of behaviour and relationships. Identifying ways to support the child to manage emotion in an environment that tuned to supporting.

"Where you find yourself now, does not dictate your future life chances"

## Challenges

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

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	<b>Legacy of historically weak teaching and curriculum design</b> Prior to joining the St Mary's Partnership in 2023, inconsistent teaching quality and a poorly sequenced curriculum did not prioritise foundational knowledge and skills. As a result, many disadvantaged pupils carry significant gaps in learning that continue to affect attainment despite rapid recent improvements.
2	<b>Limited opportunities for consolidation beyond the classroom</b> Many pupils do not receive consistent, high-quality home learning or academic support. This restricts opportunities to practise, extend and embed new knowledge, reducing fluency, automaticity and long-term retention.
3	<b>Inconsistent pedagogical practice and classroom tools</b> Previously, teachers lacked shared evidence-informed strategies, diagnostic

	assessment tools and structured approaches to scaffold learning. This limited pupils' ability to secure concepts deeply and apply learning independently.
4	<b>Weak foundations in English and Mathematics</b> Early reading, language development, number fluency and core mathematical understanding were not systematically taught through evidence-based methods. Disadvantaged pupils, particularly those with additional needs, therefore struggle with the essential building blocks required for wider curriculum success.
5	<b>Low confidence, resilience and aspiration</b> A significant number of pupils experience low self-esteem and limited support networks. This impacts motivation, independence and their belief in their own success, reducing engagement and their capacity to sustain effort when learning becomes challenging.

## 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
<p><b>Closing historical gaps from legacy weak provision</b></p> <p>Disadvantaged pupils rapidly close foundational knowledge gaps caused by previously inconsistent teaching and curriculum sequencing</p>	<p>Assessment shows accelerated progress from individual starting points. Gaps identified through diagnostics are addressed within the term. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils move in line with or above national</p> <p>How? PiXL diagnostics, QLA and therapies. DTTR cycle. Curriculum sequencing. Teacher rubric and coaching to strengthen expert instruction</p>
<p><b>Consolidation and practice beyond lessons</b></p> <p>Pupils routinely practise and embed new learning, leading to greater fluency and confidence</p>	<p>Increased completion and quality of practice tasks. Improved retention in revisit tests. Pupils demonstrate automaticity in core skills and explain learning with confidence</p> <p>How? IXL tutor-led practice and targeted pathways used consistently across all year groups. Planned revisit and retrieval routines. Home learning aligned to class priorities</p>
<p><b>Consistent, high-quality classroom pedagogy</b></p> <p>Teaching is consistently ambitious, explicit and scaffolded so that all pupils, particularly disadvantaged, secure and apply new concepts</p>	<p>Learning walks and book scrutiny show strong modelling, questioning, feedback and practice. Pupils apply knowledge independently. Reduced variation between classes</p> <p>How? Partnership pedagogical model. Great Teacher Rubric. Coaching and CPD. Shared routines for explanation, questioning, scaffolding and embedding</p>
<p><b>Strong foundations in English and Mathematics</b></p>	<p>Improved phonics, spelling, handwriting and fluency outcomes. Increased maths automaticity and reasoning. Fewer pupils requiring intensive catch-up</p>

Pupils develop secure literacy and numeracy foundations that enable access to the full curriculum	How? LetterJoin for consistent handwriting development. Pip and Pap for spelling and SPaG. PiXL therapies and tests. IXL structured maths and English skill practice, NumberSense for mathematic improvement and strong sense of number understanding.
<b>Confidence, resilience and aspiration</b>  Pupils show improved self-belief, independence and engagement in learning	Pupil voice indicates greater confidence. Increased participation and sustained effort. Reduction in avoidance behaviours. Attendance and outcomes improve  How? PiXL assessments to build test familiarity and reduce anxiety. IXL personalised success pathways. Oracy, feedback and relational practice embedded across classrooms

## 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: £ 23,333

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<b>PiXL membership</b> – diagnostics, QLA, therapies and summative testing £4,000 per year	EEF guidance highlights diagnostic assessment and targeted academic support as high impact when embedded in whole class teaching. PiXL enables forensic gap analysis, therapy-based re-teaching and consistent assessment aligned to the national curriculum. The Partnership DTTR model ensures swift diagnosis, teaching and revisit to secure learning. Improves familiarity with tests and pupil confidence	1, 3, 4, 5
<b>IXL whole-school licence</b> – personalised practice and tutor-led pathways (English and Maths) £7,333 per year (Year 1 of 3) £7,333 per year (Year 2 of 3) £7,333 per year (Year 3 of 3)	EEF evidence supports structured practice, feedback and small group or targeted academic support to build fluency. IXL provides immediate feedback, scaffolded progression and teacher monitoring. Supports self-led consolidation and guided intervention, increasing practice time and confidence. Consistent use across all year groups ensures equity of access and sustained skill development	2, 4, 5
<b>LetterJoin handwriting and transcription site licence</b> £4,000 per year	Research shows that automatic transcription frees cognitive load for composition and improves writing quality. Structured, explicit modelling and daily practice improves fluency and stamina. Consistent whole-school handwriting approach reduces barriers for disadvantaged pupils. LetterJoin provides progression, modelling and repetition that align with evidence on deliberate practice	4

<b>Pip and Pap spelling and SPaG programme</b> across KS1 and KS2 £2000 (embedded curriculum resource)	Systematic phonics and spelling instruction are strongly evidenced in EEF literacy guidance. Explicit teaching of spelling rules, morphology and grammar supports long-term retention and writing accuracy. Builds foundational literacy knowledge that disadvantaged pupils often lack	4
<b>NumberSense programme</b> for early maths fluency £1,000 per year	Oxford University Press NumberSense uses structured, small-step teaching and frequent retrieval to build number sense and automaticity. Aligns with EEF maths guidance which prioritises fluency, multiple representations and systematic practice. Particularly effective for pupils with gaps in foundational understanding	4
<b>Mathematics consultant</b> – targeted training and coaching for staff £5,000 per year	EEF implementation guidance shows that high-quality professional development and coaching have greater impact than standalone resources. Builds teacher expertise in modelling, scaffolding, manipulatives and responsive teaching. Strengthens consistency of pedagogy across classrooms	1, 3, 4
<b>Whole-school pedagogical model and teacher rubric</b> – coaching, monitoring and CPD £0 direct cost (staff development time)	EEF identifies high-quality teaching as the most impactful lever for disadvantaged outcomes. A shared instructional model improves explanation, questioning, feedback and practice. Reduces variability between classes and ensures disadvantaged pupils receive consistently strong teaching	1, 3, 4, 5
<b>Structured retrieval</b> , revisit weeks and planned consolidation routines £0 direct cost	Cognitive science (Early Career Framework) and EEF evidence show spaced practice and retrieval improve long-term memory and retention. Ensures learning sticks rather than fades. Particularly important where home learning support is limited	2, 4
<b>Oracy, relational practice and confidence-building approaches embedded in classrooms</b> £0 direct cost	EEF research links oracy and social emotional learning to improved attainment and engagement. Builds vocabulary, self-belief and resilience. Supports pupils to articulate thinking and take academic risks	5

## Targeted academic support (Removing barriers first, to enable learning)

Budgeted cost: £ 160,300

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<b>Whole-school SEND leadership coaching and specialist support</b> (weekly across the year). Executive Headteacher and SEND leaders access structured coaching, networks and evidence-informed guidance to strengthen provision design, adaptive teaching, intervention	The EEF highlights that high-quality teaching and effective SEND leadership have the greatest impact on disadvantaged pupils. Coaching and sustained professional development are shown to improve teacher practice more effectively than one-off training. Regular expert coaching supports leaders to implement the graduated response, deploy support staff effectively, and use assessment to target need, leading to improved academic progress, attendance and engagement for pupils with additional needs. Building leadership capacity	1 – Low attainment in reading, writing and maths for disadvantaged pupils with SEND; 2 – High levels of SEMH and complex need; 3 – Inconsistent adaptive teaching; 4 – Attendance and engagement barriers; 5 – Staff

planning and staff capability. (£7,500)	also ensures consistency and sustainability across the school.	confidence expertise in meeting complex needs
<b>Targeted multi-strand support through Saints Foundation Mentoring:</b> (1) Respect, relationships and misogyny prevention programme for boys; (2) Maths and reading intervention groups using multi-modal and practical approaches for SEND learners; (3) Enrichment sports and physical activity programme for disadvantaged pupils to increase engagement and attendance. (£5,000)	Research from the EEF and Public Health England shows that social and emotional learning, physical activity and targeted small-group academic support positively impact attainment, behaviour and wellbeing. Explicit teaching around relationships, respect and positive masculinity supports safer behaviours, improved mental health and readiness to learn, particularly in communities affected by domestic violence. Structured maths/reading interventions using multi-sensory approaches improve outcomes for pupils with SEND. Enrichment sport improves attendance, self-regulation, belonging and motivation, all of which correlate with improved academic progress.	2 – SEMH needs and behaviour; 3 – Low reading/maths attainment for SEND and disadvantaged pupils; 4 – Attendance and engagement; 5 – Wellbeing and safeguarding-related barriers
<b>Peace of Mind wellbeing, yoga and mindfulness specialist</b> (weekly 3.5-hour provision including targeted pupil groups and staff decompression/coaching time). Identifies pupils with emerging mental health needs and provides preventative, therapeutic and regulation-based approaches to enable learning readiness. (£13,300)	Evidence from the EEF and NHS mental health guidance indicates that social and emotional wellbeing, self-regulation and reduced anxiety directly support improved academic outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged and trauma-affected pupils. Mindfulness, movement and therapeutic approaches improve focus, behaviour, attendance and resilience. Early identification of wellbeing needs prevents escalation to exclusion or persistent absence. Staff wellbeing support also improves classroom consistency and quality of teaching.	2 – SEMH and mental health needs; 4 – Attendance and engagement; 5 – Wellbeing and safeguarding barriers to learning
<b>Specialist Speech and Language Therapy</b> for double-disadvantaged pupils, including direct therapy and staff training. (£17,000 SLA)	Oral language interventions have very high impact for low cost (EEF +6 months). Speech and language competence underpins reading, writing and comprehension. On-site provision ensures consistent access for pupils who do not attend NHS appointments and builds staff capacity to embed strategies daily.	1, 3, 4, 5
<b>Qualified Partnership Teacher of SEND (0.5 contract).</b> Specialist teacher working directly with double-disadvantaged pupils (FSM and SEND). Provides in-class coaching, adaptive planning, targeted intervention and quality assurance of provision. Ensures the most vulnerable pupils receive precise support and that teachers are equipped to meet need effectively. (£30,000)	The EEF highlights that high-quality teaching, supported by specialist expertise and targeted small-group/individual support, has the greatest impact for disadvantaged pupils. Coaching and modelling for teachers improves classroom practice and sustainability more than standalone interventions. Early identification and graduated response are strongly linked to improved attainment and reduced gaps for pupils with SEND.	1, 2, 3, 5
<b>Therapy Dog – Freddie (introduced 2025).</b> Trained therapy dog providing daily	Evidence shows that social and emotional learning approaches can add +4 months progress (EEF). Animal-assisted interventions are associated with	2, 4, 5

<p>SEMH regulation, supported entry to school, anxiety reduction and nurture sessions for pupils who struggle with attendance, engagement or emotional regulation. (£4000)</p>	<p>reduced anxiety, improved emotional regulation and increased readiness to learn. Supporting regulation and attendance removes key barriers to academic engagement for disadvantaged pupils.</p>	
<p><b>Universal free breakfast provision (daily bagel and cereal offer for every pupil).</b> Ensures no child starts the day hungry and removes stigma by offering to all. Supports concentration, attendance and readiness to learn, particularly for pupils affected by poverty. (£5000 – additional time for cooking)</p>	<p>Research links breakfast provision to improved concentration, behaviour and attendance. The EEF and Public Health evidence indicate that addressing basic physiological needs improves cognitive functioning and learning readiness. Universal provision reduces stigma and increases take-up among disadvantaged pupils. Removing hunger is a prerequisite for effective learning.</p>	<p>1, 2, 4</p>
<p><b>Artist in Residence programme (weekly).</b> Professional artist works alongside disadvantaged pupils with identified strengths or interest in art, providing mentoring, high-quality modelling and creative development. Opportunities extend to visits to local galleries and cultural venues. Skills and practice are cascaded across the school through workshops and exhibitions. (£20,000)</p>	<p>Arts participation is linked to improved motivation, engagement and self-esteem (EEF +3 months). Cultural capital and enrichment experiences are shown to broaden aspiration and strengthen school belonging, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Mentoring and mastery experiences increase confidence and persistence, supporting wider academic success.</p>	<p>2, 3, 4</p>
<p><b>Free enrichment clubs led by school staff (no cost to families).</b> All clubs are free and prioritise disadvantaged pupils, with at least 75% of places allocated to pupils eligible for pupil premium. Clubs include art, debating, drama, LEGO, and maths (times tables fluency). (£8500 at £25 per hour for 12 weeks over 3 terms)</p>	<p>Participation in structured enrichment and extended learning activities is associated with improved attendance, confidence, social skills and attainment. Removing financial barriers increases participation for disadvantaged pupils. Academic-focused clubs (e.g. maths fluency, debating/oracy) directly strengthen curriculum knowledge and language development, while wider clubs improve engagement and belonging.</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4</p>
<p><b>Trips, visits and cultural capital enrichment (subsidised for disadvantaged pupils).</b> Educational visits, residentials, performances, galleries, museums and local experiences are heavily subsidised. Pupil premium pupils attend at no cost. Contributions are</p>	<p>The EEF and wider research highlight that enrichment and cultural capital experiences improve engagement, vocabulary, background knowledge and aspiration. Access to real-world experiences strengthens comprehension and writing outcomes by increasing schema and language exposure. Removing financial barriers increases participation for disadvantaged pupils and supports attendance, belonging and motivation to learn. Equity of access</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4</p>

limited to a capped, one-off annual donation (£30 maximum) to cover transport only. Ensures all pupils access the full curriculum and wider experiences regardless of family income. (£50,000)	ensures disadvantaged pupils benefit fully from the school's broader curriculum entitlement.	
<b>ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) programme – year-long targeted provision.</b> Delivered by our qualified and trained Assistant SENCo. Provides structured 1:1 and small-group sessions for pupils with SEMH, attachment or trauma-related needs. Closely aligned with our whole-school Trauma Informed Schools approach (Year 2 of implementation). Focuses on emotional literacy, regulation strategies, resilience and readiness to learn.	The EEF identifies social and emotional learning approaches as delivering an average +4 months additional progress. Targeted SEMH interventions improve self-regulation, behaviour, attendance and classroom engagement, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Trauma-informed practice supports safety, belonging and executive functioning, enabling pupils to access learning more consistently. Early therapeutic support reduces escalation to exclusion and improves long-term outcomes.	2, 4, 5

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

Budgeted cost: £ 82,500

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<b>NGA governor training and annual subscription</b> – tackling disadvantage, poverty and vulnerability (in-person training plus subscription) £1,500 per year (approx).	EEF implementation guidance highlights that strong governance and informed leadership are critical to effective strategy and spending decisions. Training increases governors' understanding of poverty, trauma and mental health so that challenge, scrutiny and funding decisions are sharper and better targeted. Regular revisiting keeps disadvantaged pupils at the centre of strategic planning	1, 5
<b>Attendance incentives and rewards, including 'be in it to win it' termly prizes (e.g. bikes) £2,000 per year</b>	EEF attendance research shows that improving engagement and belonging, alongside clear expectations and positive reinforcement, increases attendance. Incentives motivate families and create a culture where attendance is celebrated. Supports early intervention before persistent absence becomes entrenched	5
<b>'I Belong Here' attendance and belonging project for pupils at risk of severe absence £2,000 per year</b>	Evidence shows that relational approaches and a sense of belonging improve attendance and engagement. EEF social and emotional learning guidance demonstrates that connection, identity and peer relationships increase motivation and school commitment. Personalised mentoring reduces barriers and strengthens ties to school	5

<p><b>Joined-up support for travelling families, including expectation-setting, liaison with other schools and education provision when travelling £1,000 per year (staff time and resources)</b></p>	<p>EEF parental engagement research highlights that clarity of expectations and strong home-school communication improve attendance and outcomes. Coordinated approaches reduce gaps in learning and maintain continuity of education. Prevents pupils from becoming off-roll or severely absent</p>	<p>2, 5</p>
<p><b>Community events and parent workshops to explain school systems and learning tools (e.g. IXL information sessions) £1,000 per year</b></p>	<p>EEF parental engagement evidence shows that structured support to help parents understand learning approaches has positive impact. Increasing parental confidence with tools such as IXL improves practice at home and extends learning time. Builds partnership and shared responsibility</p>	<p>2, 5</p>
<p><b>Internal alternative provision – Pathways class for SEMH and high-need pupils £75,000 per year (staffing and resourcing contribution)</b></p>	<p>EEF behaviour and SEL guidance shows that targeted support, smaller groups and relational practice reduce exclusions and improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils. A calm, structured environment supports regulation, engagement and reintegration. Prevents lost learning time and promotes inclusion</p>	<p>3, 5</p>

**Total budgeted cost: £ 266,133**

## Part B: Review of the previous academic year

### Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

#### Overview

Outcomes for pupils who are known to be disadvantaged reflect both the lived realities of the community we serve and, historically, variability in the effectiveness and urgency of our provision.

Across phases, previous attainment patterns (under previous leadership) shows a consistent picture. Children enter the school with broadly age-appropriate personal, social and physical development, but weaker early literacy and language foundations. This gap then widens through phonics, reading fluency and curriculum access, leading to lower combined outcomes at Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics and grammar where language demands are highest. These trends are evident in Early Years, the phonics screening check and end of Key Stage 2 outcomes for Ever6 pupils.

While disadvantage presents genuine barriers, we are clear that these outcomes cannot be attributed to context alone.

Historically, there has not been sufficient urgency or precision in how disadvantaged pupils were tracked, taught and supported. Staff practice has varied. Expectations around accountability have not been consistently sharp enough. Interventions have sometimes been well-intentioned but not always evidence-informed, tightly monitored or evaluated for impact. In addition, newer tools and pedagogical approaches introduced across the school, including structured phonics, diagnostic assessment systems, explicit modelling and retrieval-led teaching, were not always fully understood or implemented with consistency. This limited the extent to which disadvantaged pupils benefited from high-quality, first-wave teaching.

In short, gaps were known but not always acted upon with the pace or clarity required.

Since the leadership change in September 2025, with the Executive Headteacher leading the school full time, this position has shifted significantly.

There is now a clear and unapologetic expectation that:

- every teacher knows who their disadvantaged pupils are
- progress for these pupils is monitored routinely and discussed explicitly
- staff can explain and evidence the impact of their teaching choices
- interventions are precise, time-limited and evaluated
- pedagogy reflects the school's agreed approaches rather than individual preference

Disadvantaged achievement is no longer viewed as an 'additional' focus. It is the lens through which the quality of teaching is judged.

Leaders have strengthened:

- use of assessment and diagnostics to identify need early
- structured phonics and reading fluency practice
- explicit teaching models (I-We-You, retrieval, vocabulary instruction)
- coaching and in-class mentoring to improve staff expertise
- termly pupil progress reviews with a sharp focus on Ever6 pupils

- accountability for reporting the impact of funded provision

This has created a cultural shift from support being reactive to being deliberate, evidence-informed and measurable.

We recognise that improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils is not about adding more interventions, but about improving the quality and consistency of everyday teaching. The responsibility sits with all staff, not solely with leaders or specialist teams.

The legacy of variable urgency explains where we have come from. It does not excuse outcomes. Our current strategy is built on the belief that, with high expectations, strong pedagogy and relentless monitoring, disadvantaged pupils at Valentine will achieve in line with their peers nationally.

### Early Years and Foundation Stage – 2025 Disadvantaged Achievement

*FSM6 cohort 2024-25: 12 children*

Headline

- GLD = 50%
- LA = 53.3%
- National = 51.7%
- 👉 Broadly in line nationally, slightly below LA.

Successes

- Physical Development 75% expected (strong gross motor 83%)
- PSED 66.7% (relationships + managing self solid)
- Understanding the World 66.7%
- Numbers 75%
- Natural World 83%

Our disadvantaged data shows that children are:

- socially settled
- emotionally regulated enough to learn
- physically school-ready
- not showing early maths disadvantage

### Year 1 Phonics Screening Check – 2025 Disadvantaged Achievement

*FSM6 cohort 2024-25: 29 children*

Headline

- Working at/above standard = 58.6%
- National = 66.8%
- APS 23.2 vs 29.9 national

### KS2 outcomes – 2025 Disadvantaged Achievement

*FSM6 cohort 2024-25: 56 children*

Headline (Valentine Ever6 vs national Ever6)

Measure	School	National	Gap
RWM combined	27.5%	47.7%	-20pp
Reading ≥Exp	47.1%	63.5%	-16pp
Writing ≥Exp	47.1%	59.5%	-12pp
Maths ≥Exp	33.3%	60.8%	-27pp
GPS ≥Exp	31.4%	60.0%	-29pp

Avg scaled scores 95–97 range 102–103	5–7 points
Relative strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading is strongest of the core</li> <li>• Writing slightly better than maths/GPS</li> <li>• Some GDS present (not zero)</li> </ul>	
Clear structural gaps	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maths and GPS particularly weak</li> <li>• Very low combined</li> <li>• Scaled scores show depth + fluency issues</li> </ul>	

## Externally provided programmes

Programme	Provider
<p>Leading Together Programme (3-year school improvement and leadership coaching model focused on improving outcomes in disadvantaged communities and schools previously judged Requires Improvement)</p> <p>The Teach First <i>Leading Together Programme</i> supports leadership capacity, coaching and implementation of evidence-informed improvement strategies, strengthening teaching quality and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils across the school.</p>	Teach First
<p>Outdoor Learning and Gardening Curriculum Development (whole-staff training, curriculum planning support and practical horticulture education using lodge, forest school and polytunnel spaces to enhance wellbeing, engagement and experiential learning)</p> <p>The Hampshire outdoor learning and gardening programme improves pupil engagement, attendance, wellbeing and oracy, while providing practical, real-world learning experiences that particularly benefit disadvantaged and SEMH pupils.</p>	Hampshire County Council

## Further information

At Valentine Primary School & Nursery, improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils is not viewed as a separate initiative or additional strand of work. It is integral to whole-school improvement and sits at the heart of our expectations for teaching, curriculum and leadership.

The majority of our disadvantaged pupils also experience overlapping barriers, including SEND, SEMH needs, attendance challenges, high mobility and delayed language development. As a result, our strategy prioritises strengthening universal provision first, ensuring every classroom offers high-quality, inclusive teaching, before layering targeted and specialist support where required.

Our recent Ofsted inspection in May 2025 recognised that pupils across the school – *but specifically our disadvantaged* - are typically working at age-related expectations within lessons and that relationships, inclusion and personal development are strong. However, the report also identified that end of key stage outcomes, particularly examination performance for some groups including disadvantaged pupils, have not consistently reflected the standard of learning seen day to day. Leaders were clear that this dip in performance must be addressed to secure stronger achievement. This judgement has sharpened our focus and reinforced the need for greater precision and urgency in translating classroom learning into sustained attainment.

We are clear that context explains barriers but does not excuse outcomes.

Historically, while support for vulnerable pupils was caring and well-intentioned, there was not always sufficient urgency or consistency in how disadvantaged achievement was monitored, challenged and improved. Staff understanding of newer tools and pedagogical approaches, including structured phonics, diagnostic assessment, explicit modelling and retrieval-based practice, varied. As a result, implementation was inconsistent and disadvantaged pupils did not always benefit from the full impact of evidence-informed teaching.

Since September 2025, with the Executive Headteacher leading Valentine full time, expectations have changed significantly.

There is now a clear and collective accountability that:

- every teacher knows precisely who their disadvantaged pupils are
- progress for these pupils is reviewed routinely and reported explicitly
- staff can demonstrate the impact of their teaching and interventions
- practice aligns with agreed school pedagogies rather than individual preference
- underperformance is addressed swiftly through coaching and support

Disadvantaged achievement is now the lens through which the quality of teaching is evaluated.

### **Strategy planning and implementation**

Our strategy is informed by:

- the EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium
- national assessment outcomes and internal tracking
- phonics, reading and maths diagnostics
- attendance, behaviour and safeguarding data
- SEND and SEMH profiling
- professional dialogue with staff, pupils and families

Priorities are reviewed termly by the Executive Headteacher, SENCo and senior leaders, with regular monitoring through pupil progress meetings, learning walks, book looks and intervention reviews. Funding decisions are based on evidence-informed practice and evaluated for measurable impact and sustainability.

At Valentine, we place particular emphasis on:

- high-quality teaching and adaptive practice in every classroom
- early identification of need through assessment and a graduated response
- strong early language, phonics and reading foundations from Nursery and EYFS
- removing barriers linked to wellbeing, attendance and engagement
- building staff expertise through coaching, modelling and professional development
- use of agreed tools – such as IXL and PIXL
- consistent use of agreed pedagogical approaches, including I–We–You modelling, retrieval practice and explicit vocabulary instruction

### **Evaluation**

Impact is evaluated through:

- termly attainment and progress data
- phonics and reading diagnostics
- attendance and persistent absence trends
- behaviour and exclusion data
- pupil voice and wellbeing measures
- case studies for pupils accessing targeted provision

Where provision does not demonstrate impact, it is refined or ceased. This ensures funding remains tightly focused on approaches that accelerate learning rather than simply adding activity.

### **Wider activity not dependent on pupil premium funding**

Support for disadvantaged pupils is strengthened through whole-school initiatives funded through core budgets and partnership working, including:

- strengthened curriculum design with a clear focus on reading, oracy and vocabulary
- structured phonics and early reading embedded from EYFS
- whole-school behaviour and relational practice training
- leadership development and coaching for middle leaders
- inclusive SEND provision, including Pathways and specialist nurture environments
- enrichment opportunities, trips and experiences to broaden cultural capital
- close multi-agency working with health, social care and community services

These approaches ensure disadvantaged pupils benefit from strong universal provision, with pupil premium funding used to enhance and accelerate progress rather than replace core entitlement.

### **Summary**

In 2025, outcomes for disadvantaged pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 dipped, reflecting a cohort with high mobility and complex SEMH needs alongside historical inconsistency in pedagogical implementation. However, earlier phase indicators, including Early Years foundations, phonics development and reading practice, show strengthening provision and improving consistency.

With clearer leadership, higher expectations and sharper accountability now embedded, Valentine is confident that the right systems and teaching approaches are in place. Our focus is uncompromising: disadvantaged pupils will achieve in line with their peers nationally.

Improving their outcomes is not an additional priority. It is the measure of our success as a school.