



**ST JAMES'**  
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

## **Disadvantaged Pupils Strategy**

### **2024-25**

Date of Adoption	October 2024
Date of Review	October 2025

#### **St James' Mission Statement:**

*To ensure everyone within our school **family** achieves their full potential, to encourage learning and development through **faith**, and to strive for **excellence***

#### **Rationale:**

The DFE continues to provide additional funding to schools to help disadvantaged children of all abilities perform better, and close the gap between them and their peers. We believe that all children within our school family should be given equal opportunity to reach their full potential. This statement details our school's use of Pupil Premium funding to help improve the attainment and progress of our disadvantaged children. It outlines our Disadvantaged 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.

#### **Aims:**

Rooted in the principles of compassion, justice and solidarity, this strategy draws inspiration from the Catholic faith's teachings, which emphasise the inherent dignity of every human being and the obligation to care for the most vulnerable. We aim to address the disparities that affect individuals and families, allowing us to bring about positive change and create a more just and equitable society. This strategy stands as a testament to the enduring influence of faith in fostering social harmony and justice for all, irrespective of their socio-economic circumstances.



### School Overview

<b>School Name</b>	St James' Catholic High School, Cheadle Hulme
<b>Number of pupils in school</b>	825
<b>Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible students</b>	131 (16%)
<b>Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers</b>	2024-25
<b>Date this statement was published</b>	October 2024
<b>Date on which it will be reviewed</b>	October 2025
<b>Statement authorised by</b>	Laura Moss (Assistant Headteacher)
<b>Pupil Premium Lead</b>	Viki Bradford (Associate Assistant Headteacher)

### Funding Overview

<b>Pupil Premium funding allocation this academic year</b>	£137,303
<b>Pupil Premium funding carried forward from previous years</b>	0
<b>Total budget for this academic year</b>	£137,303

## Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

### Statement of intent

In line with the aims of this policy, we strive to ensure disadvantaged children make the same or better academic progress in comparison to their non-disadvantaged peers within school and nationally. The Disadvantaged Pupils Strategy should remove or alleviate as many barriers as possible for our disadvantaged learners giving them the best possibility of success. It should also support their pastoral wellbeing including behaviour, attendance and mental health. All children should be given the opportunity to achieve success and where there are factors affecting these chances, we will aim to resolve them and support the child.

### Challenges

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

Challenge Number	Detail of Challenge
1	Pastoral concerns for a small group of KS3 and KS4 children (identified as focus children) may hinder their academic progress and that of their peers.
2	Attendance (including persistent absence) is below that of non-disadvantaged children. Low attendance reduces the positive impact of all the measures put in place to improve attainment and progress.
3	A number of children's mental health and wellbeing may prove to be a barrier to learning and progress. Since Covid, there is an increased number of students, both disadvantaged and not, who are struggling with anxiety and depression which is affecting their concentration, attendance, progress and academic performance.
4	Literacy skills, including reading, may be a barrier to learning and progress for a group of disadvantaged children. For many of our disadvantaged students, regular reading is neither a habit nor an expectation, this often contributes to a narrow vocabulary, a lack of variety in sentence structure, lower comprehension skills and less cultural capital; negatively impacting attainment across all subject areas.
5	Limited home access to resources and cultural experiences may impact children's potential for learning and progress.

### 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 Outcomes	Success Criteria
1. The progress and attainment of disadvantaged children to be the same or better than their non-disadvantaged peers, both within school and nationally. Strengthened and more effective links between academic and pastoral provision to facilitate purposeful intervention strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress and attainment of disadvantaged children to be in line with non-disadvantaged peers. This will be tracked at each termly data point and also be a focus in Faculty, Line Management and Raising Standards Meetings</li> <li>Comparative reporting completed to show progress between data capture points and evidence of appropriate action plans</li> <li>Reduced attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children in all subject areas</li> <li>Discussion and dialogue between academic and pastoral Middle Leaders to identify areas for support and intervention with targeted actions implemented</li> <li>Reduced behaviour concerns among disadvantaged children, including suspensions</li> </ul>
2. To continue to improve the attendance (especially persistent absence) of disadvantaged children through a variety of support methods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved attendance figures amongst disadvantaged children to be a minimum of 96%</li> <li>Reduction in persistent absence of disadvantaged children</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improved communication and engagement with families of disadvantaged learners</li> </ul>
<p>3. Greater mental health and wellbeing provision for all children, especially disadvantaged children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement Thrive Mental Wellbeing service</li> <li>● Access to mental health support within school</li> <li>● Mental health and wellbeing focus in the PSHCE curriculum</li> <li>● Wellbeing activities to take place in Form time</li> <li>● Effective partnerships with external providers, such as Pennine Trust's Mental Health Support Team, increasing the available provision and expertise.</li> <li>● Regular pupil voice data collection to identify and address concerns to reduce impact on learning and progress</li> <li>● Regular information and avenues for support provided to parents and carers</li> <li>● Staff training and CPD focusing on student mental health and wellbeing</li> <li>● Appointment of Mental Health Lead</li> <li>● Celebration and recognition of Mental Health Awareness Week</li> </ul>
<p>4. Promotion of reading for enjoyment and improved literacy skills as evidenced in children's progress and attainment across key stages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improved outcomes at KS4, both internal and externally validated data</li> <li>● Increased exposure to, and engagement in, literacy activities across the curriculum</li> <li>● Greater opportunities for extended reading as evidenced in lesson observations and schemes of work</li> <li>● Weekly Form time reading to increase exposure to quality texts and literature and promoting reading for enjoyment</li> <li>● Progress of disadvantaged lower prior attainers tracked to identify the impact of literacy strategies</li> <li>● Line Managers to ensure curriculum models are appropriate for all learners including disadvantaged children, creating opportunities to fill gaps in knowledge using knowledge organisers and vocabulary lists</li> <li>● Further develop the role of Reading Ambassador to increase the number of pupils reading for enjoyment</li> <li>● Creation of 'Recommended Reads' for each subject area to promote reading around given topics, developing deeper knowledge, understanding and cultural capital</li> <li>● Increased home/school partnership with materials to support literacy and reading shared online and through face to face events</li> </ul>
<p>5. Provision of opportunities for home access to resources such as electronic devices and revision guides so that disadvantaged children can utilise all of the different learning styles used at school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provision of revision and study guides to facilitate independent revision</li> <li>● Support in accessing revision or learning resources for specific KS4 disadvantaged children who are below target in internal assessment data</li> <li>● Strengthened partnerships with parents/carers with delivery of 'How to Support your Child' session(s), materials, resources and events</li> <li>● Laptop loan scheme to support families who require additional resourcing</li> </ul>

### Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium this academic year to address the challenges listed above.

### Teaching (for example CPD, recruitment and retention)

**Budgeted cost: £68,625**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge numbers addressed
<p>Focus children identified by AAHT through regular analysis of termly data. Faculties to focus on these identified children adopting a range of suitable strategies to support their academic and pastoral progress.</p> <p>Focus children and disadvantaged children added as standing agenda items to Faculty meetings and department development CPD time.</p> <p>Regular Raising Standards meetings completed to highlight focus children (including disadvantaged children) to Head of Faculty and ensure suitable actions are being taken to support them, as well as monitored to measure the impact.</p> <p>Development of personal pupil profiles detailing how to best support specific children with their learning.</p> <p>Sharing of best practice across faculties and pastoral leaders to ensure a range of strategies are being used to support and challenge disadvantaged children.</p>	<p>Academic progress and attainment of disadvantaged children has been below that of non-disadvantaged children for a number of years.</p> <p>EEF research shows increased impact of targeted support.</p> <p>Some Faculties have greater gaps between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children. Sharing of best practice and information through Middle Level Leader meetings and shared resources would support these faculties and pastoral teams.</p>	1, 4
<p>Ensure all children, including all disadvantaged children, are explicitly taught skills for learning (metacognition) to support memory recall and reduce gaps in knowledge.</p> <p>Continued whole school focus on stickability, recall and interleaving through knowledge organisers, vocabulary lists and carefully planned and sequenced curricula.</p>	<p>Research (Daniel Sobel) acknowledges that many disadvantaged children find it more difficult to access learning at home and will therefore have greater gaps in knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Research carried out by Kate Jones (SSAT lead practitioner) has shown that when used constructively, retrieval practice improves the long-term memory recall of children. This in turn can improve children's application skills and their ability to transfer their knowledge to new concepts and situations. Knowledge organisers are a snapshot of essential content to provide equity in revision and recall material.</p> <p>The DfE also states that 'More successful schools were more likely to be using metacognitive learning strategies' to support disadvantaged children.</p>	1, 4

<p>Curriculum progression models for all subjects to be updated regularly, ensuring disadvantaged children are considered and that a broad and balanced curriculum is offered.</p> <p>Curriculum progression models and schemes of work designed to expose disadvantaged children to greater cultural capital and experiences.</p> <p>All Faculties will identify careers specifically connected to their subject area. These are to be explicitly highlighted to children, included in SOW and labelled on curriculum maps.</p>	<p>The 2002 Education Act requires schools to provide a “balanced and broadly-based curriculum” which: promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of children at the school and of society, and prepares children at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.</p> <p>A report from Impetus found that disadvantaged children are twice as likely to be NEET. Explicit exposure to careers in KS3 and KS4 will support children’s aspirations and future success.</p>	<p>3, 4, 5</p>
<p>Robust system of identifying exam access arrangements with any disadvantaged children prioritised to ensure they have the appropriate support in place for internal and external examinations.</p> <p>Ensure support staff are suitably trained to support those disadvantaged children with exam access arrangements.</p>	<p>Removing any potential barriers to learning, attainment and progress will allow children to be more successful both academically and pastorally, as well as promoting greater confidence and self belief.</p> <p>To ensure the best support is provided in assessments, staff delivering this support should be suitably trained.</p>	<p>1,3</p>
<p>Increased focus and profile of whole school disciplinary literacy to support disadvantaged children for whom literacy is a barrier.</p> <p>Embed whole school literacy and reading policy, referring to aspects in SLT LINK meetings to ensure sustained priority and focus on the school’s approach to literacy.</p> <p>Reading for pleasure is encouraged and reading to take place in Form time consistently.</p> <p>Literary events calendarised, promoted and celebrated to raise the whole school profile.</p> <p>Continued development of the St James’ Literary Canon to allow disadvantaged children access to quality reading materials.</p> <p>Year 7 children to partake in the Book Trust’s BookBuzz initiative, ensuring all disadvantaged children experience choosing and receiving a book of their own.</p>	<p>Creating a culture of reading and a word rich environment allows children to access all areas of the curriculum with greater ease and success. Children become more effective communicators and build confidence with the spoken and written word.</p> <p>Assessment of disadvantaged children’s work highlights that vocabulary is a key area for development, in line with national themes. Richer vocabulary leads to better quality exam responses and therefore attainment in literacy-based subjects. (Alex Quigley, ‘Closing the Vocabulary Gap’)</p> <p>EEF report 2018 states that schools must ‘prioritise disciplinary literacy across the curriculum’ to support progress of all children, including disadvantaged children.</p> <p>Book Trust programmes are designed to support changes in reading behaviour.</p>	<p>4, 5</p>
<p>Continued focus on quality first teaching including appropriate differentiation and planning for disadvantaged children.</p> <p>Use of seating plans to support disadvantaged children in lessons.</p> <p>Use of Faculty department development time to focus on CPD to enrich pedagogy and apply relevant strategies to specific areas for development.</p>	<p>The most significant factor in supporting progress and attainment is teaching within the classroom and ensuring this is as effective as possible.</p> <p>The Sutton Trust report (2011): The effects of high-quality teaching are especially significant for children from disadvantaged backgrounds: over a school year, these children gain 1.5 years’ worth of learning with very effective teachers, compared with 0.5 years with poorly performing teachers.</p> <p>Consistency in seating plans within the classroom</p>	<p>1</p>

	<p>contribute to a sense of continuity and stability across each subject. In general, a more regimented environment helps children, especially disadvantaged children, to feel in control of their studies.</p> <p>EEF report (2013) states, 'Good teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils'.</p>	
<p>Robust system of data tracking both academically and pastorally.</p> <p>Suitable assessments completed by children to identify strengths and areas for development. All assessments will contain interleaving to review prior learning and identify gaps.</p> <p>Range of intervention strategies put in place in response to data and tracking process.</p> <p>Communication with parents and carers to identify specific areas for development, offering appropriate strategies to remove barriers to learning and support in independent learning and revision in the home.</p>	<p>Robust and timely data tracking allows Senior Leaders and Heads of Faculty to quickly and accurately identify those children who would benefit from additional support and/or guidance.</p> <p>Identifying strengths and areas for development (effective feedback) is identified by The Sutton Trust as a high impact strategy for supporting disadvantaged children.</p>	1, 2, 5

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

**Budgeted cost: £30,156**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge numbers addressed
<p>Targeted academic catch up and support for disadvantaged children who are persistently absent from school.</p> <p>Support given to aid access to revision or learning resources for specific KS4 disadvantaged children who are below target in internal assessment data.</p> <p>Pastoral support through Attendance Officer to address reasons for persistent absence of disadvantaged children.</p>	<p>DfE research (2016) shows that children with no absence are 1.3 times more likely to achieve grade 4 or above at GCSE, and 3.1 times more likely to achieve grade 5 or above, than children who missed 10-15% of all sessions.</p> <p>EEF states 'evidence consistently shows the impacts that targeted academic support can have' (2023).</p> <p>EEF states that 'tackling persistent absence is an important priority for improving outcomes' (2024)</p>	1, 2, 5
<p>Reading age tests to be carried out for all Year 7 children to identify those children for whom literacy intervention will be necessary to support their overall academic progress. These tests will be carried out twice a year to ensure the correct children are being targeted and progress can be measured.</p> <p>Literacy and reading intervention delivered by support staff for those children who score lowest on the aforementioned reading age tests, focusing on skills pertinent to current curriculum focus.</p> <p>Support and resources offered to disadvantaged children and their parents/carers to overcome barriers</p>	<p>EEF report (2021) suggests that, 'Schools should expect and proactively plan to support students with the weakest levels of literacy, particularly in Year 7'. It also states that, 'Assessment should be used to match students to appropriate types of intervention, and to monitor the impact of interventions'.</p> <p>EEF research (2021): 'Improved literacy outcomes...Ensuring students have an opportunity to use skills from the intervention setting in the classroom and across different subjects.'</p> <p>EEF (2021): 'Well-designed school communications</p>	2, 4, 5



<p>to learning/revising in the home and to focus on attainment and celebration of successes.</p>	<p>can be effective for improving attainment and a range of other outcomes, such as attendance.'</p>	
<p>AAHT to monitor the academic and pastoral progress of low prior attaining children, including disadvantaged children.</p> <p>Identify literacy needs of low prior attainers and ensure targeted intervention is available.</p> <p>Numeracy intervention for Year 7 low prior attaining children, supporting disadvantaged children to close gaps in attainment.</p>	<p>In 2019 only 1.9% of low prior attaining children achieved grade 5 or above in Maths and English and according to an EEF report, 'Students eligible for the Pupil Premium are more likely to be low-attaining than other children'.</p> <p>EEF states that 'interventions can have a significant impact on pupils'</p>	<p>1, 4</p>
<p>Support strategies in place to address any concerns with children's home learning. Staff to monitor homework and liaise with Heads of Year where there are concerns, especially for disadvantaged children.</p> <p>Homework club to continue with staff available to support children. Prefects to support younger children with homework.</p> <p>Identify disadvantaged children who are unable to access home learning and identify barriers to this, such as not having access to the internet or not having a suitable working environment. Suitable support will be put in place to remove these barriers.</p> <p>Ensure all Year 7 disadvantaged children are supported in accessing the school's Chromebook programme.</p> <p>Continue to offer Chromebook Club for Key Stage 3 children to ensure familiarity and confidence with IT to support learning.</p> <p>Excellence Prefects to support Y7 peers in completing homework and reading aloud to develop oracy.</p>	<p>EEF report (2016) states, 'Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to have a quiet working space, are less likely to have access to a device suitable for learning or a stable internet connection and may receive less parental support to complete homework and develop effective learning habits. These difficulties may increase the gap in attainment for disadvantaged children. Homework clubs can help to overcome these barriers by offering children the resources and support needed to undertake homework or revision.'</p> <p>The DfE Reading Framework (2023): 'Pupils should be able to choose books freely...and benefit from paired discussion'</p>	<p>1, 4, 5</p>
<p>Focused mentoring of identified disadvantaged Year 11 children who are failing to make the necessary academic progress, or struggling with mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Heads of Year, Heads of Faculty, SENCO and AAHT to identify children who need such support.</p> <p>English, Maths and Science intervention for targeted children through subject specific resources and targeted support as identified by teaching staff.</p>	<p>The EEF Report (June 2020) on improving Mathematics in KS2 and 3 showed that over half of children eligible for free school meals did not achieve expected levels in Maths.</p> <p>WHO (2023): The impact of Covid-19 lockdown on children's mental health and wellbeing is significant, with 30% of young people reporting a negative impact on their mental health, and 16% of adolescents reporting low life satisfaction, with girls being more affected.'</p> <p>The Children's Commissioner Report (April 2020) states that, 'school closures are likely to have widened the gap further between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils'.</p>	<p>3, 5</p>
<p>All disadvantaged children have access to the full curriculum without barriers.</p> <p>Support with children attending academic trips and visits.</p>	<p>Without the necessary equipment and resources, children are less likely to engage in the full curriculum, thus reducing their exposure to opportunities and hindering their academic and pastoral progress.</p>	<p>1, 2, 5</p>



<p>Ensure disadvantaged children have the necessary equipment to access the full curriculum, including PE kit, ingredients for Food and Nutrition and basic stationery.</p> <p>Disadvantaged children in Year 11 to be supported with their organisation and with study and revision equipment.</p>		
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### Wider strategies (for example related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

**Budgeted cost: £38,522**

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge numbers addressed
<p>Identify both academic and pastoral concerns with a specific focus on disadvantaged children.</p> <p>Where concerns are identified, suitable support strategies are adopted to ensure these children make progress and have fewer barriers to their learning.</p> <p>Disadvantaged children identified through the pastoral review process will be a focus for Faculties and Heads of Year.</p>	<p>A closer collaboration between pastoral and academic to provide support with well-being, which in turn aids readiness to learn as well as mental health of disadvantaged children. The rationale is to remove any barriers to academic success through improved metacognition and to track progress and performance.</p> <p>The Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition identified that disadvantaged children are, 'at greater risk of poor mental health' due to Covid-19.</p>	1, 2, 3
<p>Weekly attendance recording and monitoring for disadvantaged children and data shared with the school's Senior Leadership Team.</p> <p>Attendance Officer to identify and address attendance concerns for disadvantaged children, Heads of Year to monitor and communicate with parents to support and improve attendance.</p> <p>Use of the Education Welfare Officer to ensure the importance of attendance is highlighted to disadvantaged children and any possible support is put in place to ensure they are attending school regularly.</p>	<p>Children with greater attendance will make greater progress and achieve better outcomes from their studies. In 2023, the average GCSE grade of children at St James' with over 95% attendance was more than a grade higher than those children with attendance below 90%.</p> <p>The national averages for attendance and persistent absence are worse for disadvantaged children when compared to non-disadvantaged children.</p>	1, 2
<p>Behaviour policy and framework updated to support the whole school drive for academic and pastoral excellence.</p> <p>Quality first teaching and effective classroom management used to ensure disadvantaged children are provided with a suitable working environment and encouraged to make progress.</p> <p>Behaviour of disadvantaged children(suspensions) monitored by AHT Behaviour and Attitudes.</p>	<p>The promotion of positive behaviours for learning support the creation of an effective learning environment for all, with disadvantaged children benefiting from this.</p> <p>National averages for fixed term exclusions show that a higher percentage of disadvantaged children are excluded from school than non-disadvantaged children. This then leads to reduced attendance and potential gaps in learning.</p>	1, 2
<p>Encourage disadvantaged children to attend extracurricular clubs and activities. This will be tracked and monitored to identify whether disadvantaged children are accessing these further opportunities.</p>	<p>A lower percentage of children take part in extracurricular activities than non-disadvantaged children. This limits the experiences they are exposed to in their formative years.</p>	2, 5

<p>AAHT to monitor parental engagement with events such as Parents' Evening. Where disadvantaged children's parents do not attend these events it is followed up to ensure an effective home school partnership.</p>	<p>EEF (2021) An effective home school partnership is integral in supporting children's academic and pastoral progress. Ensuring there is support from parents/carers can improve a child's progress and attainment.</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>Facilitate visits from external employers to allow disadvantaged children to access information about a wide range of opportunities and careers.</p>	<p>Many disadvantaged children have low aspirations and can have a lack of motivation. Exposing them to further experiences and opportunities can develop these characteristics and support in their future successes. DfE (2015): 'pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are: twice as likely to be not in education, employment or training (NEET) and at higher risk of ending up in poverty as adults.'</p>	<p>1, 5</p>
<p>Whole school/Year group literacy events to promote reading, literacy and language skills. Such events will also support skills such as teamwork and communication.</p> <p>Exposure to experiences such as author visits to build aspiration and develop understanding of how learning translates to the outside world.</p>	<p>Many disadvantaged children have low academic aspirations and can have a lack of motivation. Exposing them to further experiences and opportunities can develop these characteristics and support in their future successes.</p>	<p>1, 3, 4, 5</p>
<p>Ensure whole school rewards reflect a fair balance between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children (where appropriate).</p>	<p>Rewards and incentives are particularly effective in encouraging child engagement.</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>Monitoring of access to careers advice for disadvantaged children. All disadvantaged children at KS4 are offered access to careers guidance.</p> <p>Mock interviews completed for Year 11s with all disadvantaged children getting experience of a job interview.</p> <p>Careers Advisor will ensure all disadvantaged children have access to careers advice and guidance throughout the school year.</p>	<p>Greater exposure to careers and career experiences will promote higher aspirations and give all children, including disadvantaged children, more motivation to succeed in school.</p> <p>Every young person needs high-quality careers guidance to make informed decisions about their future. Good career guidance is a necessity for social mobility: those young people without significant social capital or home support to draw upon have the most to gain from high-quality careers guidance.</p> <p>These actions will address the Gatsby Benchmarks, specifically 1, 5, 6, 7 and 8.</p>	<p>1, 5</p>
<p>Effective transition practices to support disadvantaged children through the transition process. Disadvantaged children from primary schools identified and encouraged to participate in additional transition events and opportunities. This will include additional transition lessons and opportunities to visit the school.</p>	<p>CFEY identifies, 'a disproportionate impact of the transition between primary and secondary school on disadvantaged children's social and emotional learning and academic self-confidence'.</p> <p>Secondary schools engaging with primary partners allows the early identification of barriers to the learning and progress of disadvantaged children.</p>	<p>1, 3, 4, 5</p>

**Total Budgeted cost: £137,303**

## 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 children in the 2023 to 2024 academic year.

The existing strategy aimed to reduce the progress gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children. In 2023 progress 8 for disadvantaged children was -0.66. There has been a significant increase and the progress 8 for disadvantaged children, and in 2024 it had increased to -0.09. The progress and attainment of our disadvantaged children remains above national averages and the gap between disadvantaged children and non-disadvantaged children is significantly smaller than previous years and significantly smaller than the national gap.

During the 2023/24 academic year, there was no marked increase in the proportion of disadvantaged children being suspended from school in comparison to their disadvantaged peers.

Attendance remains a focus of our disadvantaged strategy as it continues to be a key barrier in the attainment and progress of our disadvantaged children. Children with above 95% attendance achieved an average grade greater than those whose attendance was below 90%.

A mental health practitioner has been successfully recruited, offering mental health and wellbeing support to disadvantaged pupils. This new appointment, alongside the pastoral systems within the school and upskilling of existing staff, has resulted in the significantly increased access to mental health support in the school. Children are taught during PSHCE lessons about how to care for themselves and how to access support should they need it.

All subjects across the school have a strategically designed curriculum, which builds in opportunities to revisit topics and interleave content and skills. All curricula are in line with National Curriculum guidance and/or GCSE requirements and there is a focus on retaining information through recall, retrieval and stickability. This focus is further supported by the introduction of knowledge organisers and vocabulary lists to underpin schemes of work. Curriculum Progression Maps are regularly quality assured and revised to ensure the curriculum remains current and appropriate. The curriculum design led to above average progress in the 2024 GCSE examinations.

All children in the school have had access to literary events, such as World Book Day, DEAR day and the St James' Literary Canon. Children are given time to read in school and supported in accessing suitable reading materials. Those children for whom reading is a barrier have been targeted and supported. Disadvantaged children are prioritised when identifying children to support through internal intervention, external tutoring or liaison with the SEND team.