

**Covid-19 Catch-Up**

Learners across the country have had significant disruption to their education over the period of the Covid-19 pandemic. The educational deficit that this has bestowed is significant and exists across the whole spectrum of students. To assume that only one particular group or those with a particular performance profile have been impacted is wrong and if held to will result in misguided policies and a gross underestimation of the problem.

At Birkenhead Sixth Form College, we recognise the extent of the challenge that lies ahead and we have reconfigured our entire provision to ensure that we are able to enhance how we educate and support all our students and so help each and every one of them make up the lost ground that has been accumulated through no fault of their own.

Our principal means of achieving this is through the massive increase in the amount of teaching we will be giving to all our students. We have increased lesson time in each subject by 60 minutes per week. This increase is in addition to the standard 270 minutes that is normal for each of our Level 3 courses and so we now provide 330 minutes each week in each subject to **all** our students.

We have no doubts that this is far superior to any commercial online tutoring add-on that is available. We frankly find it inconceivable that such an approach might be seen as being the core of any meaningful solution to the current situation.

Achieving the above has not been easy and will put a strain on significant parts of the College, however, we see this as a price that has to be paid to ensure our students and teachers are given the time and space they need to flourish.

On top of this general provision, we will continue with our award-winning mentoring and small group support work. This targeted work to support students with academic challenges has been run successfully for a number of years and we appreciate the continued support of our partners in the university sector, without whom we would not be able to provide this fantastic service.

The resources involved in achieving all the above are substantial: it is a whole College approach and is only achievable due to the excellent resource management at the College and the fantastic staff who work tirelessly.

Whilst it is not significant, we also appreciate the small additional sum of money that has been granted to the College via the 16-19 Tuition Fund. This resource comes with a range of conditions attached that make the deployment of the resources cumbersome and narrowly applicable. However, we will use it with the conditions laid out. Specifically, we will be using this resource to hire additional staff and to add hours to some existing staff. They will be tasked with working with individuals and small groups identified within the prescribed conditions laid out in the funding document. We will have one-to-one work and small groups as deemed appropriate and this will be focused on developing the academic skills of those students who have come to us with grades 4 or 5 in English and Maths and also those students identified as coming from disadvantaged backgrounds.