**Narrowing the Gap- Including allocation of DfE catch-up funding**

The government has announced £1 billion of funding to support children and young people to catch up.

Schools’ allocations are calculated on a per pupil basis, providing each mainstream school with a total of £80 for each pupil in years reception through to 6. This means we will receive £24880 this year to help us support our pupils. Schools have to use this funding for specific activities to support their pupils to catch up for lost teaching over the previous months. Schools have the flexibility to spend their funding in the best way for their cohort and circumstances. To support us to make the best use of this funding, the Education Endowment Foundation has published a support guide for schools with evidence-based approaches to catch up for all pupils. We have considered this when planning our approach for the use of this funding.

**The barriers we need to address to help pupils catch up**

The main barriers we need to overcome can be categorised in two key areas:

**Gaps in learning**

The specific support needed for the children varies across the school. The younger children in school need a greater focus on the catch up of early reading with a strong emphasis on direct phonics teaching. Moving on from there, this changes as early as Year 2 where children still need support for early reading but there is also a greater need for supporting writing, especially children’s stamina. This pattern continues higher up the school. By year 6 there is still the need for some targeted writing support but there is also a need to focus on aspects of maths and opportunities to challenge and investigate to support greater mastery. In addition, there may be additional support or catch up for specific children if we have any temporary closures or periods of quarantine. Although the school is well prepared to support home learning there will be some children that need a rapid and targeted catch up after returning from such an event to ensure they are back on track rapidly.

**Wellbeing and mental health**

This is not as significant an aspect as we had originally thought but there are still children that are finding the transition back in to school difficult and there are still anxieties amongst pupils and parents. This may become a greater issue in the coming months if there is a second wave of infection that causes further disruption to schooling.

**What we plan to do**

We will be addressing some of the gaps through the use of a learning mentor. We have successfully recruited a learning mentor through the Teach First mentoring program. That mentor will work across the whole of the school to provide focussed small group and individual catch up programs. In addition our PSA is now being allocated time to support the catch up of reading of some of the more vulnerable learners from KS1. We are also employing a part time teacher who will focus on taking whole classes to deliver specific areas of the curriculum. This will allow the class teacher to do focussed catch up support with small groups and individuals. This will be timetabled to allow us to target the support in the areas and year groups with the greatest need.

We are using our PSA to support vulnerable children and families. If there are families with greater needs we will look for more external support, looking at counselling and play therapy provision using the bungalow project.

**How we will check that our plan is making a difference**

*As with all school interventions and support, we will be reviewing the impact regularly. These reviews will look at academic progress alongside children’s engagement and ability to access the curriculum as normal. The aim is to close the gaps entirely so that all children are working at the age related standard that they would have been at had there not been a global pandemic. Combining this support with quality teaching and learning we will look to move children beyond that point if the gaps are closed within the year. We will use parent voice, pupil voice and observation to assess the wellbeing of children and judge the impact of any wellbeing interventions that we put in place.*