



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 £18,312 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

We have had access to psychologists and other experts, during lockdown to help us to unpick the potential needs of our young people as they re-engage with learning in school.

- One of the drivers in our thinking around the barriers we need to address is the mental well-being of our children. This is encapsulated in a think piece by Barry Carpenter - A Recovery Curriculum: Loss and Life for our children and schools post pandemic: *'The common thread that runs through the current lived experiences of our children, is **loss**... From loss emanates three significant dynamics that will impact majorly on the mental health of our children. Anxiety, trauma, and bereavement are powerful forces. For them all to appear at once in an untimely and unplanned fashion is significant for the developing child. Our children are vulnerable at this time, and their mental-health fragile. And on top of that, they are witnessing a sea of adult anxiety, which they unwittingly are absorbing. There will be many students who are young carers, and this loss of freedom will be combined with a weight of responsibility that will have made academic learning feel inconsequential.'*
- Having been 'out of school' for a significant time the academic gaps will be evident, as many aspects of the curriculum had not been taught in a way which has 'stuck' and behaviours for learning will need to be re-established in the school setting. Building the stamina for a full day in school; ensuring that there is appropriate individual challenge/support are important aspects for us; in order for children to 'catch up.' Research shows that

Maths can have the most 'negative impact' in terms of retaining knowledge and prior skills during disrupted learning; we are therefore using the recommended tools from the DfE and White Rose Maths to address this for all of our children. In reading we will continue with DEaR (Drop everything and read) time and increased work on comprehension skills. For our older readers who are working on fluency, we will replenish our age appropriate reading materials.

- In our youngest children we acknowledge the enormous part that language development plays in their life chances and anticipate that there may be barriers through the missed opportunities through lockdown.
- As staff we need an enhanced repertoire of skills in order to meet the needs of learners to catch up, while ensuring that we are ambitious and challenge pupils to reach their potential.

What we plan to do

- We will add to our established work in addressing the mental well-being of our children via external support from local sources directly and indirectly as part of a working party to develop our own practice, and through our counselling and therapeutic offer.
- We have access to a range of interventions; which can be used with children who require a specific programme; other children will have interventions from staff in the classroom as part of quality first teaching. Staff will work together to assess and meet the needs of their cohort; which will be supported (and challenged) by senior leaders in school and the trust.
- For our youngest children we will increase focus on the assessment and development of language and early reading skills.
- We will support staff in developing their skills in securing school improvement in the unique circumstances we are in this academic year; through an additional sustained programme based on the work of Tom Sherrington. This will support the existing school improvement plan and the practical elements around timetabling the day, staggered starts and finishes, which is allowing for more teaching/learning time.

How we will check that our plan is making a difference

- We will see success from our therapeutic work when pupils will be better able to meet the challenges of school/life and have their individual well-being needs understood. There will also be increased capacity (as we had accrued a significant backlog, in terms of waiting list during lock down) moving forward; so that the service

will be available to children when they need it. As ever in our work we are looking to support children to be more resilient successful learners/people.

- In Maths and Reading across school our intent is for the time out of school to have minimum impact on learning, through our actions around our recovery curriculum.
- We anticipate that the work we do around reading and language in our Early Years, will remove obstacles and support children in becoming successful and confident readers/writers/communicators.
- With the additional and sustained training, staff will be better equipped and more focussed on achieving goals through an enquiry+ approach to secure improvements for the children – we will see children catch up and move forward positively.

Work to support mental health and well being	10700
Language and early reading work	4832
Resources to support fluency in older pupils	1698
Staff training	1010
TOTAL	18240