

Catch up premium: Coronavirus (COVID19) strategy statement

Version 1 | May 2021

Academy name:

What is the catch-up funding for?

- In June 2020 the government announced £1 billion of funding to support children and young people to catch up on missed learning caused by coronavirus (COVID19). This is especially important for the most vulnerable pupils and pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds who we know have been most affected.

How will we use the catch-up premium?

- Because we know our pupils well, we will use this funding in a way that suits them and their circumstances, but we will use it for specific activities to help them catch up on missed learning.
- We will particularly focus on disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils as we know that they have been most affected.

How do we ensure that our spending is effective?

- By ensuring that our spending is in line with our catch-up priorities
- Through regular monitoring of student data
- By evaluating and reviewing our strategy

1. How we intend to spend the grant

Blackthorns Community Primary Academy has been granted £16,900 through the Catch Up Premium. We have given careful consideration to how we will use this money to ensure pupils close the gap in learning following periods of remote learning and school closures, and how we can best support the mental health and wellbeing of all our pupils. The funding spend links closely with our academy and trust-wide key targets in developing our curriculum and reading offers as well as the key elements of our Recovery Curriculum.

1] £900 has been spent on targeted online tutoring. The pupils from year 5 and 6 were identified by teachers through assessment, data analysis, conversations with parents and consideration of future needs. The National Tutoring Programme supported those children with extra support for elements of maths and English. This provision took place at home during the period of lockdown (children of critical workers or identified as vulnerable accessed this at school) and continued at school when pupils were able to return. £200 was allocated for equipment to enable these children to access this successfully.

2] £6500+ is being spent on an experienced intervention teacher who provides in-school tutoring, or remote in the case of school closure, for individual and small groups of pupils. These intervention sessions are planned in line with the class teachers' assessments of children's progress and enable pupils to close the gap in learning in core subject objectives.

3] £1000 has been spent to purchase a subscription to a classroom learning app "Seesaw." This platform has engaged children and families during the period of remote learning. Teachers can empower students to create, reflect, share, and collaborate. The user friendly interface allows students to evidence their learning using photos, videos, drawings, text, PDFs, and links. Teachers and support staff have been able to assess and feedback on learning to the children. It has proved to be an efficient tool to distribute student materials in one easily accessible place and share with families. The platform is beneficial to all moving forward out of lockdown and is now being utilised both in the classroom and at home to support learning and homework and provides additional communication around the child.

4] £850 has been selected to improve pupil access to rich, diverse, targeted high quality reading materials. This money has funded the online reading provision Bug Club and Easiread. Both resources have supported engagement with and enjoyment of reading when there was limited access to texts from libraries at school or in the locality and is in place for the rest of the academic year.

5] £2,160 is being spent on Clicker 8 is a valuable software resource that supports literacy development in pupils. It provides a word-processing tool that gives speech feedback, talking spell checker and word predictor that can support a diverse range of needs and

ages. It can support early writing with words, phrases and pictures that are used to build sentences. It can also be used to develop reading, speaking and listening skills, with content that supports the curriculum. Teachers can check pupil progress and assess their understanding, making decisions about next steps. This resource has been partially funded by the Friends of Blackthorns parent body.

6] During the period of remote learning Blackthorns held parent consultations using School Cloud, an online solution to enable effective communication between parents and class teachers. The platform is beneficial to both the school and parents, providing a convenient and safe space for face-to-face communication around the child. £300 of the Catch Up Premium fund is allocated to subscribing to this platform, and we are able to continue to meet with parents in this way in the future.

7] £150 is being designated to providing specialist outdoor learning for each class to enhance their curriculum. This learning opportunity will have the benefits of promoting pupil wellbeing and opening them up to learning beyond the class room.

There will be money carried forward and this is intended to support further targeted tutoring within school, following our successful appointment of an experienced teacher working in this role. We believe this will provide our teachers and pupils with a consistent method for supporting future pupil progress as the ramifications of the period away from school emerge in the longer term.

2. How the effect of this expenditure on the educational attainment of our pupils will be assessed

We have been careful to select our projects and allocations of funding with long term recovery in mind. In this way, our choices have been guided by the principles of pupil progress in learning that are always uppermost in our minds and the nurturing of positive experiences around the wellbeing of our children.

1. The National Tutoring Programme will be assessed through immediate feedback from parents, pupils and teachers accessing the online platform on a weekly basis. Within the site, there is room for communication between pupils, tutors and teachers. Feedback from tutors on individual achievements and progress from each session and next steps is available shortly after. Attendance is monitored and recorded by the tutors for the school to view.
2. By employing an excellent teacher with experience of tutoring, we have added an incredibly valuable asset to our team around our children. Our new member of staff instantly built positive relationships with children and parents, despite initial sessions requiring face-to-face meetings remotely online. In school, it has been possible for us to develop the provision to include more children, who are now benefitting from targeted interventions in different areas of learning. Progress is reported to class teachers weekly and dialogues around the child can now happen within the school. Pupil progress will be tracked through progress and attainment data, discussions

between class teachers and the school management team at Pupil Progress Meetings and communicated to parents through parent consultations and annual reporting procedures.

3. The work-sharing platform Seesaw has already been beneficial to teachers, pupils and parents in that it has provided an easy-to-use space to deliver remote learning content and to monitor and feedback on learning responses. Through discussions with teachers, parents and pupils, we have been able to see the benefits that it is providing and we have been able to adapt this to enhance our learning offer at home and in the classroom. We will continue to monitor the success of the platform.
4. Reading is of the highest priority at our school and the online provision in the form of Bug Club allows teachers to monitor progress through the data that it provides alongside the work that is being done in school and at home around reading. The Easiread resource supports the tracking of progress in some of our children with complex Special Educational Needs and those whose reading progression requires an alternative approach.
5. Through Clicker8, teachers will be able to assess curriculum knowledge using bespoke or provided cloze activities. The software's analytics tools gives teachers an insight into pupils' writing choices and this will provide the educator with targets for next steps in learning and help to support the child at their current level of understanding.
6. Spending allocated for the updating of parent consultations has provided the opportunity to enhance the dialogue between school and home and allowing a more joined up approach to learning. We were able to assess the impact of this through feedback and discussions with parents and through the progress seen in the work submitted remotely.
7. It is incredibly important that we monitor and support the emotional wellbeing of our pupils. Opportunities provided by outdoor learning allow children to engage with their environment and to explore different strands of their abilities and knowledge. Experiences like this also provide staff at the school with an opportunity to witness the children in an alternative setting, using a different skillset and approach to solving problems and working with others. We will monitor the impact of this through pupil voice and professional discussions between teachers and our outdoor learning specialist to analyse the benefits and next steps.