

St Peter's Church of England Primary School Aylesford Catch Up Plan 2020 - 2021

Funding

The government has given primary schools £80 per pupil for academic year 2020-21. Our school has so far received £4,950 and we expect to receive a second payment of £4,910 shortly, with a further £5,966 during the summer term 2021. This provides a total of £14,320 which equates to the £80 per pupil which has been allocated to primary schools nationwide. This is the only additional funding government has provided to us.

The government wishes this money to be spent addressing the educational issues which have arisen as a result of the disruption to education caused by Covid 19 and we are required to write a plan detailing how this money has been spent.

Pupil Progress Reviews

It is routine for us to hold what are termed 'Pupil Progress Reviews'. These generally occur in terms 2, 4 and 6. Each class teacher attends a meeting with the Headteacher, SENCo, Head of Key Stage and Mrs Cooper, who is our assessment co-ordinator. At these meetings we discuss each child's attainment levels and progress in writing, reading and mathematics. To inform this discussion, all of the children complete formal assessments in these three subjects in the weeks immediately preceding the meetings. We review their results as part of the discussion, but also look at their work in class, their attitude to work, behaviour etc.

These meetings allow us to identify which children are in need of additional support, be that through intervention groups with teaching assistants, more differentiated work in class, behavioural rewards, or those who need screening checks for dyslexia, or full assessments by educational psychologists etc. The Pupil Progress Reviews are our formal review of how well each child is progressing, and allows us to target our support accurately. From these meetings, we develop class provision maps, which detail what support is being given to certain children, and what form this support will take. Separately, children with higher levels of need will have their own personalised plans. These are shared with the parents of the child.

In September 2020, we completed a range of formal assessments on all of the children in reading, writing and mathematics. We did this earlier than normal as we felt it a priority to establish a baseline of the children's academic attainment as they returned to education. Because of the extraordinary circumstances, we also completed informal, subjective assessments of their social and emotional wellbeing and maturity, and physical development.

We then completed Pupil Progress Review meetings for each year group, where we identified need. We allocated our support accordingly. Below is a general overview of the issues we found and how we developed our support strategy, which included the money allocated from government in the catch up funding. Obviously this plan does not detail which children were involved in the different support groups.

Year R

The assessments showed that as a whole, the new Year R cohort was generally less developed in all areas than was the norm. *Many children demonstrated both academic and social/emotional development which was at least in line with expectations, and in some cases in excess of expectations.* It was not the case that all children joining us were behind in their level of development. However, a greater than normal proportion were. The children had missed some 4 months of attending nursery and/or social interaction with family and friends, which was proportionally the most time lost of any year group, when considered as the percentage of the children's life span. The results showed that Mrs Stone would need additional support in order to focus more intensively on individual children who required further support.

Key Stage 1

Last year's Year R (current Year 1) were supported very effectively during the 2020 lockdown. They were also the first year group to return to school as the restrictions were eased. Assessments at the end of the academic year 2020, when they had been in school for a number of weeks, showed that their progress and attainment were generally at an expected level. This was reinforced by the assessments completed in September 2020.

Last year's Year 1 (current Year 2) were also readmitted to school in the first wave of re-opening. However, assessments at the end of the 2020 academic year indicated that a number of them did require further support in their phonic and language development.

Key Stage 2

The children in KS2 were most disrupted by the school closure as they weren't prioritised for the return to school. Whilst we were able to return a majority to the classroom before the end of the academic year, some did not return at all. Those children in current Year 5 were not offered the chance to return to school at all, with the exception of those in the Key Worker/Vulnerable child groups.

Assessment results showed that unsurprisingly, all four year groups contained a number of children whose academic attainment had not progressed at home to the degree that would have been expected had they continued at school. Support would be required for individuals in all four year groups to address the most immediate needs.

Academic Support

As a result of this, the following actions were taken:

- Increased TA (Teaching Assistant) support was provided for current Year R, with an additional TA employed to work 5 mornings per week.
- Increased TA support was provided for current Year 2, with an additional TA employed to work 5 mornings per week.
- The Key Stage One HLTA (Higher Level Teaching Assistant) was employed for additional hours to provide increased speech and language/phonics support to those children identified in KS1 as needing such. She would be working with children from Years R, 1 and 2 to ensure that their phonic and language skills reached the expected level by the end of the current academic year.
- The Key Stage Two HLTA was also employed for additional hours. Our priority for the Key Stage Two children was to address issues in language development, as this is the key to accessing the wider curriculum. Consequently, the HLTA was timetabled to provide targeted support in reading and writing to those children in Key Stage Two whose progress and attainment levels were particularly low.

Class English and mathematics lessons were timetabled for the mornings, and a majority of the specialist intervention programmes delivered by TAs and HLTAs were timetabled for the afternoons. This meant that those children most in need of additional support in English and mathematics were not having their class lessons in these subjects disrupted by being taken out for interventions. The interventions took place in addition to the timetabled class lessons.

In the mornings, TAs and HLTAs delivered support to small groups of pupils in English and mathematics, separate from but related to that delivered in class, but which was at the level these children required.

Class teachers were given licence to reduce the curriculum they delivered, according to the wider needs of the class, in order to devote greater time to the core subjects of English and mathematics.

Ongoing Counsellor Support

We recognised the need for ongoing counselling for a number of our children who required emotional support. From September 2020, the provision took place in school, face to face, and then continued throughout the second lockdown, being delivered remotely. This provision will continue for the whole of the 2020/21 academic year. In term 6, the need for this provision will be reviewed, and if it is required, we will continue to deliver it through the coming academic year. This provision is funded entirely by the school.

Actions and Costs

Action	Target	Cost
Increased Year R TA Support	To provide sufficient support for the current Year R children that the class as a whole records average End of Year Attainment levels comparable to normal expectations against the Early Learning Goals.	£6,035
Increased Year 2 TA Support	To provide sufficient support to the Year 2 children that the class as a whole records average End of Year attainment levels comparable to normal expectations when formally assessed using appropriate SAT/NFER measures.	£3,793
Increased KS1 HLTA Support	That all Year R and KS1 children have their phonics and language development supported as required, so that all are able to pass the Year 1/Year 2 phonics tests/retests.	£7,706
Increased KS2 TA/HLTA Support	That all KS2 children record attainment levels in the End of Year assessments which are in line with expectations	£7,328
Ongoing Counsellor Support	Blocks of weekly sessions delivered to children identified as needing support or an avenue by which to express anxieties.	£3,800
Home Learning IT Support	That all pupils have access to either a laptop or tablet on which to complete their Remote Learning.	£2,690
Government Funding		£14,320
School Spending		£31,452

- This expenditure stream was added in January/February 2021 as a result of the need identified during the second lockdown.

Home Learning IT Support

During the school closure January-March 2021, the DfE allocated IT tablets to schools according to how many of their children were in receipt of free school meals. Our school received thirteen devices. However, we had previously completed an online survey to identify exactly how many children did not have access to a suitable device on which to complete their Home Learning. We knew that far more than 13 pupils did not have access to a suitable device.

We received donations of used devices and monetary donations from parents with which to buy new devices. This still did not fully address the need, particularly as an ever increasing number of key worker/vulnerable children returned to school in February. They needed a device in school on which to access the remote learning being delivered by their class teachers. To fully address this need and provide each child with a suitable device on which to work, the school purchased an additional 17 devices at a cost of £3740. However we had received £1050 in parental donations towards this cost.

Additional Spending

In addition to the money which has been spent directly on educational/emotional support to children, the school has also spent considerable amounts on activities which have enabled the children to return to education. The activities and the amounts spent are outlined below.

Increased SENCo Support – Cost £5004

We increased the number of hours worked by the school SENCo. The SENCo has needed additional time to co-ordinate the delivery of the intervention programme within the school and to liaise with parents about the needs of their children. This latter activity has involved personal phone conversations.

Increased MMS Support/Additional Expenditure – Cost £12,459

In order to maintain the isolation of our distinct bubbles as fully as possible, we have employed additional Midday Meals Supervisors (MMS). Each class now has at least one MMS who works with them. Year R require more than one MMS because of their needs.

Review

The effectiveness of our Catch Up Programme has been adversely affected by the school having to close in the latter part of term 2. The national closure until March has meant that we have had comparatively little time to address the issues which arose during the school closure in March-June 2020. These issues have obviously been compounded by the further, recent closure.

We are currently completing further assessments of the children as they return to school in March. A further round of Pupil Progress Review meetings is scheduled for the week beginning April 26th. In the meantime, we will continue to deliver the intervention programme which was in place when we closed in term 2. This programme will be reviewed at the PPR meetings, against the results of the latest assessments, and we will amend or develop the intervention programme accordingly. This plan will be updated at that point.

Catch Up Tutoring

Parents may be under the misassumption that schools have received additional funding from the government with which they can employ tutors to support those children identified as needing such. This is not the case. The sole funding received by primary schools remains the £80 per child which has been allocated as catch up funding.

The government have allocated considerable funding to the development of what is termed the National Tutoring Programme (NTP). This funding has been given directly to a small number of organisations which have been charged with creating the NTP. Schools are able to access approved tutors through this scheme. However, schools have to pay for these tutors, just as they would when accessing any tutoring service. There is no free tutoring service being provided to schools and no additional funding being given to us to employ tutors as we wish.

The government's National Tutoring Programme is apparently subsidised, so the costs to the school of employing a tutor through this scheme are £50 per block of sessions. Schools can use the £80 per child which they have been allocated to fund this provision. The tutoring programme is targeted at children identified as disadvantaged. The expectation is that a majority of those children receiving tutoring will be in receipt of Pupil Premium Funding (PPF). Schools have been told that we can also use PPF to fund the tutoring.

We have reviewed the possibility of employing tutors for some of our children and have decided not to pursue this course of action at this time. Our funds are limited, and it is imperative that we use them to deliver the most effective support for our children.

The NTP envisages that the tutoring sessions would take place during the school day and, because of the current restrictions, are likely to be delivered online via Teams etc. We feel the priority is to have our children re-engage physically with their class teachers, and not be removed from class for further online lessons. In addition, our teachers and Teaching Assistants know our children extremely well. We know where they have gaps in their learning and we are tailoring our provision to try to address those gaps. This is what is happening in class, in the intervention groups, with the activities being delivered by our HLTAs and, where we have them, by our class TAs. There seems little value at this point in removing children from lessons or interventions being delivered by their teachers within school, in order that they complete online tutoring with someone who does not know them.

Academic Mentors

Some schools are also able to employ what are termed Academic Mentors. These mentors are not qualified teachers, but will have received two weeks training prior to joining a school. They work in class fulfilling a class teaching assistant role. The DfE cover the wages of these mentors, and schools are only required to cover on costs which will likely amount to £3000 - £4000 per year. This is far cheaper for a school than the cost of employing their own TA. Schools are able to use their catch up funding for this purpose.

However, this scheme is only available to schools serving disadvantaged communities throughout England. The DfE have used the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) and Achieving Excellence Areas (AEA) to identify these communities. Aylesford does not appear to be such a community. If we are eligible to employ an academic mentor, we will investigate this option fully.