

Covid-19 'Catch up' Funding

In June, a £1 billion fund for education was announced by the government. Further guidance has now been released (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-catch-up-premium>) showing that the money is split between a catch-up premium and a national tutoring scheme. The catch-up premium is funded on a per pupil basis at £80 per pupil. This will be based on the previous year's census, meaning Thomas A' Becket Infant School will be in receipt of £42,800 (535 x £80). The spending of this money will be down to schools to allocate as they see best. To support schools 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 students.

Spending

At Thomas A' Becket Infant School, this money will be used in order to:

- Purchase curriculum resources and materials that support pupils to get "back on track". These include Bug Club to help parent's and carers access a greater range of books and to encourage more regular reading at home and Spelling Shed to encourage parents and carers to work on phonics and spelling patterns at home.
- Teacher working 1:1 with disadvantaged children in Year 2 to identify and target specific gaps in learning
- HLTAS working across each year group to target children where it had been identified that the Lockdown had affected progress. Basic skills to be taught and consolidated to enable them to successfully access the curriculum for their learning – phonics, stamina for writing, fine motor control and social skills.
- All children in Reception assessed (baseline) for speech and language by S & L TA. 1:1/group work for those children demonstrating low levels of language or comprehension.
- Fund additional support staff to develop the outcomes of children who have been identified as needing "catch up" in their learning.
- ELSA and Learning Mentor to work with those children whose mental health has suffered during lockdown and where families are identified as needing more support. More family based work to be explored to encourage a 'whole child' consistent approach.
- Whole school curriculum review to ensure key curriculum targets are taught to support whole school 'catch up' and give more time to develop and embed basic skills
- Additional Teacher for 3 days a week to provide 'over learning' across Year 2 initially and then Year 1 during the Summer Term. Teacher to support in class in the morning to give more targeted support and then overlearning for specific children in the afternoon to enable more embedded learning.

Aims

The broad aims for “catch up” at Thomas A’ Becket Infant School:

- Attainment outcomes at end of 2020-21 for all year groups will be at least in line with those at the point of lockdown in March. This means that if a child was working at an age-related expectation in a subject in March they are working at least to an age-related expectation in that same subject by the end of the year.
- By the end of the 2021-22 year, attainment outcomes for all year groups will be at least in line with those at the end of the 2019-20 year.
- The mental health needs of pupils that have arisen as a result of the pandemic are met and supported by the school.

Catch Up at Thomas A Becket Infant is:

(For all children)

- **Working through well-sequenced, purposeful learning.** For example, our school-created planning is being adapted to focus on missed objectives and consolidate the basics.
- **Focus on consolidation of basic skills.** The core skills, which enable successful learning, will require increased curriculum time across all year groups. These include handwriting, spelling of high frequency words, basic sentence punctuation, basic addition & subtraction fact recall and reading skills relevant to age.
- **Additional lesson time on core teaching.** Reading, writing and maths teaching will require increased teaching time in order to cover missed learning – particularly in the autumn term. In order to keep a broad and balanced curriculum, some subject areas may be taught as blocked days rather than weekly lessons.
- **Particular focus on early reading and phonics.** This is always a focus in the school and will continue to be so in order to develop children’s reading ability and vocabulary.
- **Assessment of learning and of basic skills to identify major gaps.** Teachers will work to identify gaps in learning and adapt teaching accordingly.
- **Time spent on mental health, wellbeing and social skills development.** This will be at the core of all catch up work as many children will have not been in formal school setting for a number of months. Emotional Literacy is an embedded part of our school.

(For some children)

- **Additional support and focus on basic core skills.** Supported by additional staffing utilising catch up premium – dependent on need as identified through ongoing assessment.
- **Additional time to practice basic skills.** This again will be dependent on need of children in order to re-establish good progress in the essentials (phonics and reading, increasing vocabulary, writing and mathematics) and there will be flexibility on timetables to allow this.

Barriers

- Children social skills have deteriorated as they have had less chance to interact outside of the nursery/school environment (YR particularly)
- Children's basic skills – phonics and writing are not where we would usually expect for all year groups and stamina is poor

Catch up at Thomas A Becket Infant IS NOT:

- Cramming missed learning
- Pressuring children and families into rapid learning
- Teachers time spent highlighting missed objectives
- Teachers time spent ticking off assessment points and extra tracking