THE HARMONY TRUST
Westwood Academy
Covid19 Recovery and Catch-Up Premium Strategy Statement November 2020

Our aim is to ensure that our children experience the best educational provision beginning with excellence in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We believe that school should be a place where every child achieves and makes progress in their learning across the whole curriculum over time. We know that parents are the single most influential factor in children's outcomes and that we need to prioritise even further the need to support parents to support their children's education. Every child has the entitlement to an inclusive curriculum, and we strive to ensure that disadvantage and additional needs do not act as barriers to learning and achievement. We aim for all our children to succeed both academically and socially, ready for the next phase of their learning and beyond as responsible and respectful citizens.

The Harmony Trust core values underpin everything we do.

Context

- Westwood Academy is situated in the most deprived ward in the country with child poverty being the highest in the UK. We know that those living in poverty have been worst hit by the virus and its wider impact.
- **Acute indicators of deprivation remain and have been heightened by the impact of the virus** these include - adults without qualifications, health issues, high level of social disadvantage where English is not the functional language.
- Families continue to feel the 'strain' of Covid 19 which includes job insecurity, financial pressure, lack of outdoor activity, inability to rely on extended family for support, lack of usual support groups and networks particularly in relation to mental health.
- Oldham is still an area of high infection and risk. Rates have increased from 50 per 100,000 to 800 per 100,000 in the period September 20 to November 20. Further local and national restrictions during the autumn term have added pressure to families and it is now accepted that long term measures will need to be in place.
- Most pupils will experience a period where they need to access their education from home. Self-isolation and bubble closures are likely to continue in the medium term. The Prime Minister recently suggested current measures until Spring 2021.
- The full extent of the long-term impact of Covid19 is not yet known.
- Managing staffing has been difficult and complex, higher infection rates have meant that more staff have either tested positive, have been told to self-isolate or are having to provide childcare as their own child has been affected by a bubble closure. On average the workforce has been reduced by at least 2 members of staff per week.
- In September 2020, the majority of pupils have not attended school for approximately six months, early baseline assessment information indicates that most have retained their prior learning but have not continue to make expected progress. All pupils are at least one term behind where they should be for their age.
- The Department for Education has added the challenge that children need to be able to access the curriculum they would be receiving if it was not for the enforced interruptions to 'normal' education. This is challenging for primary aged pupils and in particular those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, those with EAL or SEND and those pupils who are newly arrived in the UK and has also placed an additional strain on the already stretched workforce
- The government has launched the 'Coronavirus Catch Up Premium' this equates to £80 per pupil. School leaders need to consider how this will be best spent to accelerate pupil progress and close gaps quickly.

What is the impact of the school closure period?

We know that those who are disadvantaged, newly arrived, have English as an Additional Language (EAL) have Special Educational Needs are more likely to regress in their learning and have further gaps in their learning during the period of school closure. It is important to consider the effect on boys who may typically find home learning more challenging or have poorer literacy skills.

Baseline assessment information shows that

- The majority of pupils did not make progress in their learning during the school closure period.
- It appears that remote learning maintained prior attainment levels for those who engaged as they were able to practice, consolidate and reinforce their skills.
- Most pupils are now a minimum of 2 points (using Target Tracker) behind their predicted progress journey.
- The progress of all pupils needs to be accelerated during this academic year and subsequent years.
- Teacher insight highlights concerns of impact on writing stamina, in particular and the importance of focusing on literacy more widely. The lack of grammar teaching is also having an impact on children's writing composition and them subsequently meeting age related expectations.
- Many children have read and accessed texts during the closure period however they have lacked adult interactions and the direct teaching and modelling of reading skills. They therefore need reengage with reading dialogue and being able to talk about their reading.
- There are also familiar patterns in respect of attainment gaps based on gender, SEND, Newly Arrived Pupils and those classed as disadvantaged.
- Year 1 emerges as a key priority because of an interruption of the crucial reception year and school readiness.
- Dramatic drop in phonics scores in Year 2 especially for middle and lower prior attainers.
- Majority of pupils in KS2 are not on track to meet their projected end of key stage targets.

Additionally the range of challenges that we continually face have been taken into account:

- Children are entering the EYFS at both Nursery and Reception age well below age related expectations in Communication, Language and Literacy. Early years education and the characteristics of effective learning are as important as every to overcome the educational achievement gap.
- Children need higher levels of fluency in English in order to be able to read and write at an age-appropriate level.
- Increased focus on attendance.
- Review of funding leading to budget reduction and potential loss of flexibility in meeting needs
- A significant reduction in Local Authority services.
- Significant difficulty in Children's Special Educational Needs being recognised and met due to limited resources.
- Thresholds for access to Social Care services have risen making it difficult to access support for families increasing the onus on schools. The 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020' document places increased accountability on schools for the safeguarding of children.
- The introduction of universal free school meals and universal credit has changed the eligibility criteria for FSM. Many children are not identified as disadvantaged. Low income households are also not reflected in FSM figures. Children live in increased poverty; Coldhurst ward currently has the highest percentage of deprivation.

We have a very good understanding of the barriers to learning that are experienced by our children. Our children, including those who are identified as disadvantaged, often have more than one barrier to overcome. These include but are not limited to:

- Many pupils have social and emotional needs and need a calm, safe and nurturing environment which develops both social and emotional skills
- Newly arrived pupils with little or no spoken English and virtually no skills in Reading and writing upon arrival
- The majority of pupils have English as an Additional Language this includes those at the initial stages of learning English, those who are social competent and advanced bilingual learners
- In the Early Years many pupils may not have attended nursery or pre-school and have identified SLCN needs
- Prior attainment at EYFS or KS1 is often very low.
- Extended absence to overseas countries to visit relatives or to update documentation means prolonged gaps in learning
- Education can be fragmented as pupils are transient and leave and then return to the UK
- Limited relevant social and cultural experiences
- A lack of modelled literacy in the home at all levels and in particular pupils working at greater depth who need access to higher order language
- The number of families with access to a range of texts and literature is limited and the quality and appropriateness of texts may not be matched to the child's needs
- High mobility compared to regional mobility, which significantly impacts on social relationships and progress. In some cases pupils have gaps in their educational history or have attended multiple schools and therefore have many gaps in their learning
- Many families are vulnerable and require high levels of support from both the academy and children's services, additionally they generally have low levels of English
- Many families are not eligible for social housing resulting in many families living in overcrowded and unsuitable environments

Additional barriers to learning during the school closure period and while Government guidelines around social distancing and self-isolation are in place include:

- Families have reduced access to pastoral leads, safeguarding leads and family support teams who can signpost to support and resources
- There are a growing number of families within our communities that have no recourse to public funds and are therefore living in poverty and reliant of services and foodbanks
- Technology and the number of devices within homes is variable. Those who do have devices have to share between siblings which can add undue pressure and challenge to family circumstances
- Where children are living in large families there are additional constraints such as sharing devices, finding space to work, family routines are unsettled, children are caring for their siblings
- Children who typically need practical resources and scaffolds have limited or no access to them e.g. pupils with SEND, children in EYFS and KS1, low prior attainment
- Children have less time to be outdoors and less space to move around
- Children have less time to interact with their peers and develop friendships

What the research tells us:

EEF Impact of school closures on the attainment gap: Rapid Evidence Assessment
- School closures are likely to reverse progress made to narrow the attainment gap in previous years
- Disadvantaged pupils will have been disproportionately negatively affected by the school closures
- Effective remote learning will mitigate the extent to which the gap widens
- It is unlikely that a single 'catch-up' strategy will be effective
- Supporting pupils to work independently can improve outcomes (*links to metacognition and MPTA scaffolding framework*)

Nationally, Ofsted has just [published a report](#) (November 2020) setting out the main findings from its 'fact finding' visits to schools earlier this term. This expressed concern about lost learning across the age ranges and highlighted specific concerns around early years child development; setbacks in particular areas of education, including children's stamina for writing and reading, the impact of school closure on vulnerable children and mental health, and physical fitness. The report found that children who were well supported at home were most able to cope with the school closure period. Children with SEND and those vulnerable to poor outcomes were highlighted as being most affected in respect of their care and education. The report notes school leaders' and staff resilience, but also reflects the impact of COVID on staff shortages and resources. **The experience of Harmony matches the report's main conclusions.**

Taken from **DfE Coronavirus (Covid19) Catch Up Premium**

Schools should use this funding for specific activities to support their pupils to catch up for lost teaching over the previous months, in line with the guidance on [curriculum expectations for the next academic year](#).

Schools have the flexibility to spend their funding in the best way for their cohort and circumstances.

Our Priorities for the use of the Catch Up Funding

We aim to ensure that:

- Those pupils that can attend school do so everyday
- The well-being and safety of our pupils is paramount
- The curriculum is well matched to pupil need and prioritises catch-up
- The basic skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing and being numerically fluent with number and calculations are prioritised to give greater access to the wider curriculum
- All pupils have access to Quality First Teaching and learning every day – assessment, planning for progress, differentiation, challenge and support
- Support is given to those who need it most, bespoke support and intervention rather than 'off the shelf' options
- The remote learning strategy is prioritised so that all pupils can engage with their learning within and beyond the classroom
- Provision can remain open when staffing availability is challenged
- One to one tuition is available where it is needed

We recognise that we need to accelerate the progress of all our pupils. However, we also know that there are some key year groups that we need to prioritise in the short term.

Year six pupils need to be well prepared for the next phase of their education and the transition to secondary school. There is strong evidence widely available that shows that children who achieve well and are literate and numerate when leaving primary school achieve better in the wide range of curriculum subjects.

We know from research and from our experience over time, that when gaps are closed in the Early Years Foundation Stage then they remain closed throughout the child's educational career. Early Intervention has the single most significant impact and school readiness is an influential factor in determining the academic success of a child.

Quality for all children in the classroom

We have a high expectation for all children and know that the best way for the children to catch up on lost learning is to access high quality, consistently excellent teaching. Strategies to ensure this include

- Frequent professional development for teachers and teaching assistants, which includes coaching, team teaching and mentoring.
- The development of a language rich curriculum with a focus on extending vocabulary and extending cognitive academic language.
- Excellence in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that disadvantaged children have the gap narrowed at the earliest stage.
- A strong focus on the deployment and use of adults to ensure that they are effective and have impact on learning.
- Rigorous tracking of pupil attainment and achievement and timely intervention as applicable.

Enhanced opportunities for all children

- Music tuition by a qualified specialist teacher to ensure high quality learning and also support the development of verbal memory, spatial reasoning, dexterity and literacy skills.
- Specialist sports coaches to counteract the sedentary habits some pupils acquired during school closure.

Enhancement of Provision

We have a personalised approach to supporting our pupils to ensure that all children have the very best chance of success we use some of the following strategies:

- Attendance Officer – ensuring the attendance and punctuality of all children, who can attend school.
- Harmony Family Support Worker – ensuring our most vulnerable children and families are getting the support they need from school and additional agencies.
- Interventions for lowest attaining pupils delivered by funded staff.
- Phonics intervention for Key Stage One pupils.
- Oral language Interventions in the EYFS – Early Talk Boost and BLAST language programme.
- Use of technology to provide targeted support including: Purple Mash, TT Rockstars, Spag.com, MYON, Accelerated Reading.

Catch Up Funding Allocation 20-21

The Catch Up Premium allocation for the academic year 2020-21 is £15,760

The table shows how we intend to allocate the funds

Use of funding	Cost	Intended Impact
Provide high quality, targeted support to identified Y6 children through the Tutor Trust	£2190	Identified pupils will make good progress and will be prepared for the next stage of their education.
Provide high quality Phonics interventions to identified KS1 children (1.5 hours per week)	£1315	Identified pupils will make good progress and pass their phonics screening test.

Attendance officer (additional x5hours per week to monitor Covid absences)	£2434	All children who should be in school are attending regularly.
Implement age-appropriate online tools to provide children with more opportunities to practise spelling strategies and access a greater range of reading texts • 'Teach your Monster to read' App across EYs and KS1 – • Accelerated Reader and MyOn	£150 £1680	Children in all key stages are developing key skills, knowledge and concepts and making good progress in Reading and Spelling.
Implement age-appropriate online tools to provide children with more opportunities to practise mathematical skills • TT Rockstars • White Rose maths	£160 £99	Children in all key stages are developing key skills knowledge and concepts and making good progress in Mathematics.
Implement age-appropriate online tools to provide children with more opportunities to practise grammatical skills • Spag.com	£121	Children in Y2 and Y6 are developing their knowledge and understanding of grammatical concepts.
Utilise the CGP workbooks within Y6 to provide a structured approach to the teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling.	£310	Children produce high quality outcomes and are well prepared for the next phase of their learning.
Additional teacher to provide continuity in the case of staff absence and to provide small group tuition to KS1 children.	£2276	Increased capacity enables classes to remain open and reduce the impact of staff absence. Children are provided with opportunities to work with a teacher in a small group as required.
Facilitate remote learning opportunities through the use of the Purple Mash online learning platform and the supply of devices and home learning packs where appropriate.	£960	All children are continuing to access high quality learning opportunities to enable them to develop new knowledge, skills and concepts, regardless of attendance status.
To provide EY children with more opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills through the use of: • BLAST (1hr 40mins per week - 12 weeks) • Talk Boost (1hr 40mins per week 18 weeks)	£615	Children in EY are equipped with the skills required to be confident communicators.
Family support - To provide essential support to families, ensuring that all families have access to high quality advice and advocacy. This is to include emergency food supplies to families facing immediate financial hardship.	£3000	All families are well supported and barriers to learning are minimised.

Impact of the Catch Up Premium Funding

Taken from **DfE Coronavirus (Covid19) Catch Up Premium**

As with all government funding, school leaders must be able to account for how this money is being used to achieve our central goal of schools getting back on track and teaching a normal curriculum as quickly as possible.

Given their role in ensuring schools spend funding appropriately and in holding schools to account for educational performance, governors and trustees should scrutinise schools' approaches to catch-up from September, including their plans for and use of catch-up funding. This should include consideration of whether schools are spending this funding in line with their catch-up priorities, and ensuring appropriate transparency for parents.

We intend to monitor and evaluate the impact of the funding in the following ways:

The Strategy for the Coronavirus (Covid19) Catch Up Premium will be reviewed on an ongoing basis as part of the academy monitoring and evaluation cycle. This strategy document will be reviewed and updated on a termly basis throughout the academic year. The academy will participate in external and peer review processes during this year which will consider the impact of the premium through this process.

The Board of Trustees will be reassured that the catch up strategies are having an impact on pupil learning through the use of trust monitoring procedures. The trust monitors the quality of provision in its academies thorough the following processes:

- Analysing data and the context of the academy through the termly Progress and Standards meetings
- Termly Stocktake meetings with the Chair of the Progress and Standards Committee
- Peer Review Reports which are fed back to the Performance and Standards Committee
- Feedback from Parents, Staff and Pupils through Termly Forums and surveys
- Standards Moderation activity at local cluster, hub and trust wide level.

The trust has supported its academies by

- Providing support and guidance to leaders through the Learning Matters Steering Group; Recovery Curriculum, Baseline Assessment, Home Learning PPR.
- Producing data packs that support analysis of pupil and cohort need, challenge and support through the Progress and Standards monitoring process.
- Providing a template and example guidance for this report with LMSG discussion and support.
- Additional resources for remote learning, including ICT support for implementation.
- Providing additional resources to academies to increase capacity and ensure they remained open during the pandemic.

School self-evaluation and monitoring shows the following strengths:

To be completed as part of the termly academy monitoring process and updated

Appendix 1

An independent review of the use of the Pupil Premium was carried out by the Rosendale Research School in January 2019. The review included a number of classroom visits, a documentation review focusing on the Academy Pupil Premium plan, meetings with senior leaders, discussions with teachers and support staff, and a meeting with a group of pupils.

We know that many of the findings from this review will apply to the Coronavirus closure period and its impact especially as those who have been most affected are those who are disadvantaged, and so the following will be taken into consideration.

The following is a summary of the findings:

1. Irrespective of the multiple challenges faced by pupils from less fortunate backgrounds, the academic and pastoral provision for pupils and families is inspirational. The systems, adjustments, professionalism and expertise from teachers, support staff and leaders are exceptional. This is particularly impressive considering the remarkable growth of the academy over such a short period. There is a relentless focus on systems to support the extraordinarily diverse needs of pupils, rather than expecting pupils to fit with predetermined systems that suit adults best.

2. Pupils and families, who are often facing exceptionally challenging circumstances and lacking social networks are welcomed and supported at the Academy. Expert staff are deployed strategically across the Trust. These include family support, social workers, EAL expertise and wellbeing.

3. The systems and structures in place at the Academy are underpinned by strong values and positive relationships. Staff have a strong understand the Academy strategy and their roles within that strategy. In particular, the early language classes for pupils who are new arrivals were highly impressive and are a model which could be rolled out across the trust.

4. There is a strong focus on academic language, but also, a focus on language pupils need to access all aspects of Academy life (including what a cheese pie is!).

5. Pupils were extremely positive about the Academy. They were able to recall interesting and exciting learning experiences across the curriculum. They showed a good language for learning, describing a range of strategies to be sued when they came up against a difficult task. Further, they showed a strong ambition for their future careers – mostly in roles that support others.

6. There was an extended discussion about improving the attendance of disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils. Research evidence says that whilst individual incentives can support better attendance, the potential impact is limited. It is the commitment to a collective effort that sustains improved attendance.

7. Due to the unique context of the Academy, the recruitment, retention and development of teachers and other staff that can sustain positive, consistent relationships with highly mobile learners is critical. Strong relationships are fundamentally important, especially for pupils experiencing attachment difficulties. Graham Nuthall's *'The Hidden Lives of Learners'* illustrates why this is fundamental to good learning and behaviour. Strong relationships need to be at the heart of the Academy strategy.