THE HARMONY TRUST
Cottons Farm Primary 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

- Cottons Farm is situated in the lowest decile of the IDACI 2019 deprivation by postcode rankings. 62% of its pupils are entitled to Free school Meals.
- **Acute indicators of deprivation remain and have been heightened by the impact of the virus.** These include: adults without qualifications, long term unemployment, cramped housing conditions, higher levels of domestic violence, and lower levels of reported good health.
- Families continue to feel the 'strain' of Covid 19, especially in relation to 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.
- Derby is now an area of high infection and risk – in November the rates of Covid-19 were rising faster in Derby than anywhere else other than Hull. Rates have increased from 6 per 100,000 to over 400 per 100,000 in the period September 2020 to November 2020. Further local and national restrictions during the autumn term have added pressure on families and it is now accepted that long term measures will need to be in place.
- 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 in more recent weeks. 20% of the teaching staff have had to shield due to receiving government letters advising them that they are extremely clinically vulnerable. 40% of the teaching assistants are clinically vulnerable which is limiting the amount of children they can work with. 50% of the SLT have had to self-isolate for at least 2 weeks.
- In September 2020, the majority of pupils had not attended school for approximately six months and early baseline assessment information indicates that most have retained their prior learning but have not continued 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' which 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) and/or 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. Although many pupils did not engage, despite extraordinary effort from the academy, due to lack of parental support or expertise or minimal access to technology.
- Most pupils are now not at age related expectations
- The progress of all pupils needs to be accelerated during this academic year and subsequent years.
- Children's progress in phonics has been especially hard hit. Children have not only not made progress but they have forgotten their prior learning as well – due to school being unable to interrupt the cycle of forgetting effectively. This is especially true for our Year 1 cohort who have missed roughly half of entire primary school education.
- Fluency in Year 2 and 3 is an issue in reading. Children were able to read during lockdown but did not have effective models of good fluency. In addition, they lacked dialogue about reading.
- The stamina of children in writing and their basic skills has been impacted by lockdown. Children have not been used to writing at length and have forgotten some of the basic grammatical features of writing.
- 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.

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.
- Assessed on the British Picture Vocabulary Scale children are on average at least 30 months behind their chronological age when they enter the academy.
- Increased focus on attendance.
- Review of funding leading to budget reduction and potential loss of flexibility in meeting needs.
- A number of children with significant ACEs attend the school and require intensive support from the academy to avoid permanent exclusion and access learning.
- 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.

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
- Children's vocabulary is underdeveloped which impacts all other areas of learning.
- 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.
- 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 have experienced or continue to experience domestic violence. A number of families are currently living in refuge having fled domestic violence.

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
- Children often live in cramped housing (3 children to 1 bed) and therefore do not have access to quiet spaces to work in.
- 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, sustained support will be needed to catch up
- 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 expectations 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:

- SEND interventions delivered by trained staff to deliver targeted IEP work.
- Small groups phonics support for those who require it.
- Targeted vocabulary support (in class) for those identified as well below chronological age of GL vocabulary assessment
- Small group intervention for those identified as at risk of not reaching age related expectations in Year 6.
- Use of technology to provide targeted support in Maths (TimesTable rockstars & Number Bots) and Reading (AR & Myon)

Catch Up Funding Allocation 20-21

The Catch Up Premium allocation for the academic year 2020-21 is £8073.

Part of this funding was pooled with other academies within The Harmony Trust Derby Hub. This enabled the academies access to The COVID-19 Recovery Team which is lead by an experienced senior leader. By pooling resources in this way, the academies have maximised use of the catch-up funding as The Recovery Team are able

to lead on projects across all 8 academies. Examples of these project include an NQT network (to ensure quality first teaching) and cross hub CPD based on The Derby Research School recovery curriculum program. In addition to these joint projects, The Recovery Team also lead on bespoke projects within each academy that are detailed below.

The table shows how we intend to allocate the funds.

Use of Funding	Cost	Intended Impact
Mentoring of 3 teachers by the Covid-19 Recovery Team. Mentoring includes learning walks, PPA support, joint planning and bespoke advice requested by the teacher	£2938	To ensure quality first teaching in all those classes.
Investment in Accelerated Reader	£3444	To raise standards in reading by ensuring children have access to high-quality reading books in KS2 at a level appropriate to their reading fluency To allow accurate assessment of children's reading ages To allow children to read digital books at home
1:2 tutoring from Action Tutoring for 10 children in Year 6 for Reading & Maths	£688	To help 10 identified pupils make rapid progress in Maths & Reading.
Devices to support in class and remote learning	£1003	To help pupils learn remotely when they are unable to learn in school To support the implementation of Accelerated Reader

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

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.