



Dear Parents,

Tuesday 6th October 2020

Catch-Up

May I first of all apologise for the regularity of my letters at the moment. There has been a lot to communicate to you, both before we started this new term and then during the first few weeks.

I am writing today to share with you how we are going to spend the Catch-Up Funding the government are allocating to all schools.

As you are well aware, most children had 4 months away from school during the last academic year. Although we distributed daily learning for the children I am sure you will appreciate it's not the same as being taught at school by their own class teacher.

Inevitably there are gaps in the children's learning. There are maths topics we haven't been able to cover, strategies not fully understood, writing that has just not taken place.

The government are keen to close these gaps and have therefore offered all schools funding to help children to catch up.

It is up to each individual school how they spend this.

We have given it a lot of thought and consideration.

We know that the person who knows your child the best educationally is their class teacher. They know the skills and knowledge the children need to have and they are best placed to support them in acquiring these.

In the past we have offered booster classes to targeted groups of children after school. This can work but if it's not offered to everyone then if you have more than one child to collect, pick up can be a challenge.

We are also aware that, in this current situation, **all** children have missed schooling.

We are therefore proposing to offer Catch Up to all children. Every class will have an additional session on the same day which will mean that we will extend the school day by 1 hour, one day a week.

This would mean that on a Wednesday your child would finish exactly an hour later than they do now.

Extending school for an hour will enable us to offer all children additional learning time.

Pre-School and Reception children will benefit from greater access to their continuous play provision, essential for developing them socially and emotionally. All children from Years 1 to 6 will benefit from an additional basic skills maths session. Most children will have this on the Wednesday. Some year groups (Y2 and 56T and 6P) will have this on a different day due to timetabling.

In addition to this we will use an hour of the time on the Wednesday to free up teachers to work with individual children.

The government want all children to benefit from this funding as well as targeted children to have additional benefit from it. We feel this is the best way to use our funding. It meets the government's criteria and offering it to everyone on the same night makes pick up for parents manageable.

Our school crossing patrolman will be in place to assist with crossing the road at the new leaving time on a Wednesday. If your child usually attends childcare, once their school day finishes they will be able to access this as usual (CnS will be in touch about a reduced fee for this night).

I hope you can see the logic to this plan and, in particular, see the benefits for your child. For it to be successful we need your support.

Initially we will have the challenge of darker nights but as the latest finishing time will be 5M at 4:15 p.m. we feel this will should not be an issue.

Due to Parent Meetings scheduled for the first week after half term it is our intention to begin this the second week after October half term on **Wednesday 11th November and every Wednesday thereafter.** We will review this provision at the end of the autumn term but if it is working well and showing impact we plan to continue this until the end of the academic year.

(The Spanish Club that is currently on a Wednesday night will change to a Monday night straight after half term.)

If you have any questions regarding this, please don't hesitate to contact me either by phone or via the school email address tanfieldlea@durhamlearning.net

Kind regards.
Kay Hemmings
Head Teacher



Opening Doors, Enriching Lives