COVID-19 catch-up premium report 2019-22

What is the COVID-19 catch-up premium?

In June 2021, a £650 million fund for education was announced by the government. Further guidance regarding the fund can be found here: (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-catch-up-premium)

The catch-up premium is funded on a per pupil basis at £240 per pupil. This will be based on the previous year's census, meaning St Philip's has been allocated £43,920 (183 x £240). 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.

How will St Philip's spend the money?

We have decided to use all of the fund to employ an experienced teacher to further bolster our already very skilled and specialist team. This has enabled us to increase our maths and English groups by one extra group, meaning that key stage two and post 16 now have three maths and English groups, instead of two. Maths and English groups in key stage three and four have also been further increased from three groups to four. As a result, our average class sizes are now seven, instead of nine.

Why has St Philip's decided to spend the funds in this way?

Having spoken to parents and students, it is clear that some of the measures we introduced, in order to control the spread of the virus, were very popular. One of the measures we introduced was smaller class sizes. We found that, despite having fewer English and maths lessons per week, students still worked through the curriculum at a similar pace to pre-COVID times. By offering more focused and tailored lessons to a smaller group of students, we were able to deliver outstanding quality of education. We could see that individuals were really enjoying getting "more time with the teacher" during lessons.

We also felt strongly that we should spend the funds in a way that benefits all students equally, regardless of their age. By reducing the size of maths and English groups across the school, we know that all students are benefiting from a higher student to staff ratio in their core subjects. The Education Endowment Foundation report that reducing class sizes and allowing for much more focused learning is one of the most effective ways to use the funding.

How will we know we have spent the money wisely?

We expect attainment outcomes at the end of 2021-22, 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 English or maths in March, they will be working, at least, at the same age-related expectation 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 and student and parent satisfaction rates will be the same, if not better than at the last round of surveys in July 2021.