

Coronavirus (COVID-19) catch-up premium

The Government has created a one-off universal £650 million catch-up premium for the 2020 to 2021 academic year to ensure that schools have the support they need to help all students to make up for lost teaching time during the current pandemic. The money will target the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, hit hardest by the loss of learning during the pandemic. Alongside the universal catch-up premium, the Government are also launching a £350 million National Tutoring Programme to provide additional, targeted support for those children and young people who need the most help.

Funding allocation

Schools' allocations will be calculated on a per student basis, providing each mainstream school with a total of £80 for each student. Thornleigh Salesian College's first 25% instalment (due in October 2020) will be based on the school's October 2019 cohort of 1,264 (aged 11-16) students. Subsequent instalments will be based on the October 2020 cohort which is estimated to be in the region of 1,299 (aged 11-16 students). Therefore, it is estimated that Thornleigh Salesian College should receive in the region of +£100,000 in grant funding currently only available for the 2020 to 2021 academic year.

We will also have the flexibility to spend the funding, having the autonomy to decide what is the best way for our cohort and circumstances, including perhaps, small group or one-to-one tuition (through the National Tutoring Programme). The decisions are important and will be made accountable through Ofsted judgements, measuring how the funding ensures the curriculum has a positive impact on all students.

National Tutoring Programme

Separately, a National Tutoring Programme, worth £350 million, will increase access to high-quality tuition for the most disadvantaged young people over the 2020/21 academic year. This will help accelerate their academic progress and prevent the gap between them and their more affluent peers widening. There is a substantial attainment gap between students from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers with the Education Endowment Foundation suggesting this is likely to be growing significantly while schools are closed to most pupils. It is estimated that around 80% of disadvantaged students currently do not have access to quality tuition. The National Tutoring Programme aims to support schools in addressing this.

Thornleigh Salesian College 16-19 Funding

Approximately £5,000 additional funding is being provided to support small group tuition for 16 to 19 students in English, maths, and other courses where learning has been disrupted. For example, vocational courses where assessment has been deferred because of lockdown. Although the actual tuition does not need to be for GCSE English or maths, the students supported all need to be those who had not achieved grade 5 or above in at least

one of those subjects at this level by age 16. All supported students must be on a 16 to 19 study programme.

Students attending Thornleigh Salesian Sixth Form College, who have not achieved a grade 4 in English and/or maths will be prioritised with this funding. However, we can also consider whether any of our students taking A-Levels with a grade 4 could be allocated catch up support. We will use the funding to support small group tuition to maximise progress. Sixth form students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), will also be a major target of the funding, particularly where they have experienced additional disruption to learning as a result of their specific needs and disabilities. It is not an expectation that support from the fund will exceed five students, other than in one off or exceptional circumstances, with three being the optimum group number.

The Tuition Providers

A list of approved providers will be presented to our college on the 31st October 2020 with subsidised tutoring able to start in November 2020. Tuition Partners might be existing tutoring providers that have experience of working with schools or other organisations, such as charities, local authorities, universities who are able to design a new programme to meet the N.T.P. standards.

Tuition Partners will offer a range of approaches, including online, face-to-face and hybrid models and small-group and one-to-one tuition. Thornleigh Salesian College will be able to decide which Tuition Partner we work with and identify the students most likely to benefit from additional support.

Academic Mentors can also provide support tailored to their school, but most Academic Mentors will support subject-specific work (both one-to-one and in small-groups), revision lessons, and provide additional support for those shielding or not in school. Tutoring will be provided in six subject areas: English, Humanities, Maths, Modern Foreign Languages, Science, and Primary (reading, writing, maths and science), aligning the work of tutors with classroom practice. Our teachers know their pupils best and these individual relationships and professional judgement will be key in deciding who will need the most additional support. Pupil Premium students will be the primary focus, with prior attainment data deciding which students are most likely to benefit from tutoring, with evidence that low prior attaining pupils may particularly profit.

It will be very important to present the tutoring opportunities as a positive experience to further learning, with support and buy-in from parents and carers. Tutoring in pairs or small groups may reduce the potential sense of stigma that could be associated with being selected to take part in tutoring.

Report provided by:

Mike Fitzsimons – Deputy Headteacher and
Sharon O'Brien – Director of School Services
25th September 2020