

21st April 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Targetted Learning Model

As you'll be aware, children have missed a huge amount of face-to-face teaching in school both in this academic year and last, and as a school we have a moral duty to do our very best to ensure children can catch-up. As a Senior Leadership Team we have discussed at length how best to do this, and started in September with a robust but traditional intervention approach. Looking at assessment data and the fact that there has since been more missed learning, this isn't having the level of impact needed. It also means that children are often out of class a lot of the time to be taught in smaller groups.

What we need to have is an approach that makes a difference for all of our children, ensuring they don't leave our school with gaps in their learning that define them as the 'Covid generation'. As a school we received funding to support catch-up plans and we want to ensure all children benefit from this.

I am therefore writing to let you know about our plans for what we are calling our 'Targetted Learning Model'. This model goes hand-in-hand with our more holistic recovery curriculum, but is focussed on the academic side of things. This approach acknowledges that children have been impacted academically as well as pastorally by the pandemic and works to ensure every child reaches their potential.

As a school, we want the very best for our children. We feel that this approach fits in with our school vision, which states that we want our children to leave school as young people who are happy, independent, self-confident, resilient, aspirational and inspired to learn.

Background & Rationale

When school reopened in September, we knew there was a great deal of missed learning and gaps. We therefore put a catch-up plan in place which looked at targetting these gaps via



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interventions using external tutors, teaching assistants in school and any other pockets of time that we had within school.

Moving further into the academic year, the children then missed another significant chunk of face-to-face learning due to the latest national lockdown. At this stage, we found from looking at assessment data that we need to tailor our approach further. This is when we made the decision to begin to work on a targeted learning model.

The reason for this approach is that children in class groups are all working at different stages of their learning, which has been impacted further by lockdown, missed school and differing family circumstances. We therefore need to tailor our teaching to ensure that the children can make progress from the point they are currently working at.

Our targeted learning model is based on an approach that we have operated in school for some time on a smaller scale (eg. my daily English group, where all the children working in that group are working at a similar level). What this has always allowed us to do is to ensure that the children in the group get exactly what they need. What we aim to do with this targeted learning model is to implement this approach on a larger scale.

In practice, this will involve the children working more as a yeargroup rather than as a class (building on an approach that you will have already seen implemented during the school closure through home learning and skeleton school). The children will be in classes where their learning can be tailored to support rapid catch-up based on their current assessment. We made the decision to not stream into the traditional 'high', 'middle' and 'low' groupings, however work on groupings that looks at academic gaps and needs. What we know works is having children in groupings where the pitch of the learning can be absolutely what those children need. Our focus is to allow children to remember more and do more without as much adult support, building on their independence. Our aim is to ensure children make rapid progress from whatever level they are currently working at.

These groupings will apply only in the morning for English and maths, initially just in Years 2-4. The children will be told by their class teacher that they'll be working as a yeargroup and that they therefore may be with a different yeargroup teacher in the morning. This will stay consistent, so will not change day-to-day. Children will then be based in their usual classes with their usual teacher every afternoon.

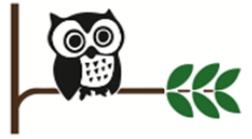


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Oswald Road Primary School

Oswald Road, Chorlton-Cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 9PL
Telephone: 0161 881 4266/4319 Fax: 0161 881 4319
Email: admin@oswaldroad.manchester.sch.uk
Headteacher: D. Howard



We have thought long and hard about this model and have taken advice from a number of people. We understand that it is a trial and may not work, but we feel that we must try something that will have a lasting impact on our children and their futures. From doing this model on a smaller scale we have seen the sort of impact it has and therefore feel confident that this approach is right for our children at this time. This is about providing the very best teaching for all children in school. This is such an important time in our children's lives and, with so much out of our control, we want to do the very best for our children while they are still at primary school.

We have included a Frequently Asked Questions section at the bottom of this letter that gives further information and detail about the model, how it will be put into practice and how it will be reviewed.

We hope that you will see that this is a decision that we have put a great deal of thought into and one that we truly feel will provide the best outcomes for our children and their learning potential after an incredibly difficult year.

I understand that this is a really lengthy letter, possibly giving you more detail than you need, we're just really mindful that we want to get this right and be as transparent as possible in our decision-making and the rationale behind it. Ultimately, we are just desperate to get this right for our children.

Kind regards,

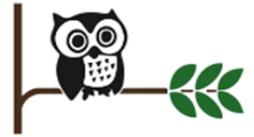
Deborah Howard

Headteacher



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Targetted Learning Model- FAQs

What is it?

Each morning children in Years 2, 3 & 4 will be split into three groups across the yeargroup so that they can be given more targetted teaching in core subjects (English and maths) for the level they are working at. They'll then return to their usual classes in the afternoon. These groups will not be 'high', 'middle' and 'low', they will be groupings based on what the needs are of the children to allow for targetted teaching.

Why are we doing it?

All children have missed a large amount of face-to-face teaching over the last year due to Covid. There is an expectation on the school to have a robust approach for the acceleration of our children's learning. This model means we can tailor the learning for every child's needs and ensure that our catch-up funding has the intended level of impact. In addition, it means that children will have more time being taught by a teacher in a classroom, as opposed to learning through interventions in smaller groups outside the classroom. Our usual intervention timetable would not have the level of impact needed to support catch-up at the required pace, however our interventions will continue in the afternoons as normal. This will work alongside our targetted model to allow for further progress.

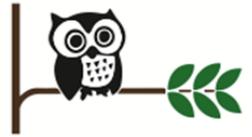
Which children will it apply to?

From 24th May the model will be rolled out and will apply to Years 2, 3 and 4. Following review, this may then be applied to further yeargroups from next academic year.



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Who has been consulted on the plans?

The governing body, senior leadership team, a quality assurance specialist, an educational psychologist, a specialist school adviser and our teaching staff.

How can parents have their say?

We are holding a parent forum via Zoom on Thursday 29th April at 11:00am for parents and carers to come along and ask any questions they may have. If you're unable to attend on this date, you are welcome to email your thoughts in advance. If you would like to attend this parent forum, please email e.linton@oswaldroad.manchester.sch.uk for the Zoom link.

We will then hold follow-up parent focus groups the week commencing 17th May. Parents can put themselves forward if they'd like to be included in these focus groups. We take our responsibility to support our children to catch-up extremely seriously, and would welcome feedback to ensure we continue to tailor the approach to best support our children.

How can children have their say?

We will be conducting pupil voice throughout Summer 2 (after June half term).

How will this be reviewed?

Informal reviews will start as soon as the model has been rolled out at the end of May and continue up until summer holidays. A review with our specialist school adviser will take place after half term. At the end of June, feedback will be gathered from pupil and parent focus groups, and this will then continue to take place every half term. The first formal review will take place at the end of June, at which point a decision will be made as to how we move forward. This decision will be communicated with parents in July regarding what will happen



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next academic year. Formal reviews will then take place half termly, if we do continue with the model next academic year.

As already noted, we take our responsibility to support catch-up extremely seriously and therefore are planning to ensure that honest conversations are held throughout. This, alongside assessment data, will form a significant part of our review. Our catch-up fund plans and reviews will all be published on the school website.



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