

25th September 2020

RE: Curriculum for reconnection, catch up and recovery

Dear Parents and Carers,

The government have frequently referred to a 'recovery curriculum' when talking about children returning to more normal schooling after lockdown. A 'recovery curriculum' is not a specific document that schools have been directed to teach. A 'recovery curriculum' refers to the adaptations that schools are making to their established curriculum, taking into consideration the extended school closure, remote learning and the impact lockdown may have had on children's academic and emotional wellbeing.

There are a number of factors for us to build into the curriculum, particularly in this half term. These include:

- Recognising children's social and emotional needs
- Identifying gaps in learning
- Rebuilding resilience in learning and re-establishing routines
- Supporting children who find it hard to cope with coming back

(Please see attached PowerPoint that explains in more detail)

Each September, staff at Moss Lane will be carry out teacher led assessments over the first few weeks of the Autumn term. The findings of these assessments give a clear baseline of the levels the children are working at. It identifies the next steps of learning that need to take place, highlighting those children who are ready to move on and those who would benefit from time to embed existing knowledge and skills. As part of our recovery and catch up curriculum the teacher led assessments have taken place as normal with particular focus on phonics, reading, writing and maths skills. We are planning and timetabling in ample PHSE learning opportunities allowing the children to explore and unpick their experiences during lockdown.

The recovery and catch up curriculum has a strong focus on the children's wellbeing. This includes giving them time to re-establish effective learning behaviours to ensure any new learning will be received and embedded effectively. Children are swiftly recapping mental maths and phonics skills that were taught prior to school closure. This is to ensure this knowledge is embedded and can be applied in their independent learning. It is 'normal' that learning is recapped at the start of a new school year; this does not have a detrimental impact on children achieving end of year expectations.

Recovery is not a one-size-fits-all process that can be achieved with a quick burst of energetic activity. We must be willing to enter into a period of recovery that recognises not only where we want to end up, but where we are right now.

As a school we have committed time during this term to ensure that routines, expectations, standards, relationships and values are quickly re-established. At the heart of these plans is getting children and adults 'back-on-track' both emotionally and academically. We have looked at the curriculum and what it will look like for children this term and beyond. We are implementing our "recovery curriculum" which acknowledges that there have been big

losses to children as they have stayed at home and that these losses can contribute to children's mental health with anxiety, trauma and bereavement playing a large role. Children will perhaps have experienced these aspects all at once and in a sudden and unplanned fashion which can leave them feeling vulnerable. Equally whether we have intended to or not, children will be having been exposed to adults who are anxious and may not be acting in their normal way or maintaining the normal routines which they are used to. To help us support children with this, our recovery curriculum will focus on three areas; pastoral care, the tailored curriculum and routines and expectations.

Catch-up funding

As a result of Covid the government has also promised additional catch-up funding for schools to support children over the coming months. We expect to receive approximately £80 per pupil. Once we have received this money we intend to give children some extra 1:1 support and additional small group teaching. This is likely to happen on a regular basis and we are in the process of identifying what needs there are across the school.

Naturally we recognise that children may have a loss of knowledge, but this does not recognise the scale of impact. If we consider the definition of a relevant curriculum as the 'daily lived experience' we must plan for experiences that provide the space for recovery. The Recovery Curriculum Framework is based upon the work of Barry Carpenter, which sets out the importance of recognising the trauma and loss that children will have been through during the Covid-19 pandemic. Successful transition for children to enable them to once again become efficient and confident learners is key. The way in which we do this is to acknowledge and accept the losses that we have all been through during the pandemic. It will be essential that we ensure we adhere to our aims and objectives within the context of our families and the school community.

The work of Professor John Hattie who has studied extended school disruptions across the world gives us a good idea about what we to do on our return. In the in the first weeks of term we will strengthen our own '3 R's' - routines, relationships and resilience. This will also form the basis of some of the first work we will undertake.

We have been thinking about how we best help our children to reconnect. Whilst we are confident that many children will quickly 'bounce back' after the lockdown we are aware that there will be some children returning who have experienced bereavements amongst friends or family or who have experienced anxiety or stress during this time. There will be a potential disproportionate effect of the pandemic on some communities and individuals and we will do all that we can to support where appropriate - using our own school HSLW and where appropriate signposting to other organisations.

In September we had long planned to begin our updated PSHE and RSE curriculum and we have now reconfigured this for autumn 2020 so that work in all year groups centres on health and wellbeing. We will allow extra time for this in the autumn term.

Broad and balanced curriculum

As a school we intend to continue with our normal ambitious and broad curriculum in all subjects from the start of the autumn term. As mentioned we will begin at appropriate starting points for all our children and this may mean that not all subjects are taught every term although as we return to normal working this is our aspiration.

Planned activities

Reception

We are aware that Reception children will not have missed any school during lockdown however we acknowledge that they will have potentially missed Nursery time and spent more time at home than expected. We will therefore:

- Have a greater emphasis on Phase 1 phonics
- A slower pace and extra time to adjust the children to a school based routine

Year 1

- In Year 1, we will be focussing on Phase 3 of Letters and Sounds in our phonics lessons, whilst recapping Phase 2
- In maths, we will develop the children's confidence using numbers to 20 in a variety of ways laying the foundations

Year 2

- In Year 2, phonics will be daily taught focusing on phases 2/3/4/5, and the Year 2 spelling programme will start when phonics phases are embedded
- In maths, early work will be used to help address gaps in children's knowledge from Year 1 e.g. money and shape, and units have been extended to allow time to go back further and ensure key skills are embedded
- During the first term, English objectives will be adapted to address missed learning and daily handwriting sessions will be introduced

Whole School

- Children in Year 1 & 2 in September 2020 will have additional phonics sessions to support catch-up
- School reading books will be sent home daily across the school
- The previous class teacher has shared this information with your child's new class teacher to assist with transition

As a school we have a Collective mind set – contextualising the lockdown. Whilst acknowledging the impact lockdown has had on the children, staff will be proactive in moving the children's mind-set forwards. For some children lockdown was a positive experience allowing more holistic and outdoor learning to take place and for us to spend quality time together. Many of our children took to home learning with enthusiasm. Our staff will use their knowledge and experience to support and help our children in 'closing the gap'. Our language will reflect a 'growth mindset' philosophy – 'you can't do it **yet**'.

PE

A full PE timetable is now operational with classes having 2 lessons per week run by their class teacher and SCL.

Music

The DFE guidance says 'Schools should note that there may be an additional risk of infection in environments where you or others are singing, chanting, playing wind or brass instruments or shouting'. Therefore, we have revised our music curriculum for the autumn term 2020 so that children do not participate in any of these activities. Fortunately, the school has many other possibilities for music teaching and we are using this time to also teach more PHSE.

Pupils with additional needs

We are aware that for some children with additional needs, returning to school after lockdown may cause additional anxiety or stress. These children will be supported by the school to ensure a smooth return.

Referrals to external agencies such as Speech and Language, CAMHS and the Educational Psychologists will continue. We will also assist families by signposting them to organisations who may be able to provide additional support during this time.

We are fortunate as a school to have a wonderful Homeschool Link Worker Mrs Sutton and a dedicated SENDco, Mrs Fulterer who are always available to support school and our families.

I hope this letter explains our approach as a school towards our 'recovery and catch up curriculum'. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me. I would rather a question be asked and be able to reassure parents than you worry alone.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Victoria Abbott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'V'.

Mrs Victoria Abbott
Headteacher