

St John's School & Sixth Form College

Year 7 Catch up Funding Plan 2016/17 Evaluation

In 2013 the Government made a commitment to provide additional educational funding to schools for each Year 7 student who had not achieved Level 4 in reading and/or Mathematics at Key Stage 2.

Since then each year St John's has received additional funding of £500 for each Year 7 student who did not achieve this benchmark in reading and/or Maths at Key Stage 2.

In the academic year 2016/2017 the changes to Key Stage 2 SATs means that schools received funding in order to support students who have not achieved the national benchmark score of 100.

St John's allocation for 2016/17 was £11,064.

This funding was used to support a group of 82 students of whom:

69 achieved a score less than 100 in Reading (of these 31 achieved a score of less than 95)

39 achieved a score less than 100 in Mathematics (of these 19 achieved a score of less than 95)

PLANNED STRATEGIES

- From September 2016 half hour daily Literacy, Numeracy & Reading lessons were timetabled for every student in Year 7. During this time individual targeted support was provided for those students who needed it.
- In Year 7, 28 students were given two additional study support lessons per week targeting reading and basic literacy skills, as well as supporting their social integration into St John's community.
- Seven students who failed to meet the required standard in Mathematics were tutored in pairs, two mornings per week by members of the Maths department.
- During the autumn term, we trialled a two week intensive intervention programme for Maths and English. Students were withdrawn from lessons every morning and had additional Maths and English lessons followed by consolidation time.
- Our successful Maths leaders programme continued to offer sixth form students the opportunity to mentor and support Year 7 students to improve their progress in Maths.
- A small group of students from Year 8 and Year 9 were also part of a Literacy Booster programme covering writing skills and focusing on written accuracy in the autumn term.

IMPACT AND EVALUATION

Introducing the additional literacy, numeracy and reading lessons in Year 7 provided us with a prime opportunity to target large groups of students and support them in improving their basic skills. It enabled us to provide additional support during these times without having to remove students

from lessons affecting other curriculum areas. Across Year 7, students experienced above average rates of progress in reading ages last year. The greatest average improvement was seen with those students who started with the lowest scores, meaning that the gap between groups of students narrowed over the course of the year.

Although weaker students in Maths continue to experience challenges with new topics, feedback from Maths teachers indicated that their knowledge and deployment of basic numeracy was significantly better when compared to previous year cohorts.

The 28 students who were given two additional study support lessons per week targeting reading, literacy and SEAL were closely monitored by our welfare and SEND team throughout the year. The students found that these lessons greatly improved their transition from primary to secondary and helped them access all curriculum areas. For example in the first term students were supported in completing a history project which they would have found difficult to tackle independently at home. Students all demonstrated positive attitudes to these additional sessions and feel happy at St John's. This is evidenced by the excellent "Attitude to Learning" scores which these students achieved throughout Year 7, in line and often exceeding those of the rest of the cohort.

Students who were tutored in Mathematics demonstrated high levels of progress with basic topics such as times tables and telling the time. Crucially they also grew in confidence in the subject and therefore began to progress more quickly when learning new skills in their normal Maths lessons. A similar pattern was observed in those Year 7 students who were mentored by our sixth formers; demonstrating increased confidence and resilience in Mathematics.

The two week intensive programme in Maths and English had a significant impact on the basic skills of the students who took part. All students were assessed before and after the programme and demonstrated substantial improvements in many key areas of literacy and numeracy which then boosted their engagement across the whole curriculum. Although the benefits of this initiative were clear, both from data collected and student/staff feedback; we need to balance this with the disruption caused to learning in other subjects during the students' first term at St John's.

All Key Stage 3 students are formally assessed midway through the spring term and again at the end of the summer term. Students in the Maths catch up group were roughly in line with the rest of the cohort when compared to their FFT Aspire target at the midyear assessment. By the time they reached the end of year they had improved significantly. Overall, students in the catchup group improved by more than one whole grade from the midyear assessment to the end of year assessment. At the same time the rest of the year group improved by a third of a grade. It is therefore pleasing to see that the targeted students are making faster progress than their peers, catching them up over time.

In English, students in the catch up group were found to be closer to achieving their targets than the rest of the cohort at both the midyear and summer assessment data collections.

The evidence suggests that the gap is closing for these students in both English and Mathematics and they will be fully supported as they continue their learning journey into Year 8.