

## Review of Progress against 2020-21 Priorities Newton's Walk

**Covid Impact.** The impact of Covid on progress in so many areas of school life has been immense this year. Well-laid plans have been re thought time and time again. We have tried hard to manage not only on a day-by-day basis but looked to the longer-term needs and welfare of all.

Safety has been a priority and staff and students have had to work in ways that they have never worked before and certainly we have had to spend in unplanned ways to meet the crisis. Our risk assessments have been robust and all questionnaires have shown that of our stakeholders have felt as safe as we could make them.

Parents and carers have been a tremendous help in supporting the many different ways of working and ensuring attendance. Our thanks to everyone.

### To maximise progress for all

Assessments made in Summer 2020 revealed the impact of Covid on pupil progress against our three measures: exceeding /achieving / below expectations. Whilst targets are based on our knowledge and assessments, the journey that pupils have been on prior to attending Newton's Walk frequently mean that there is a great deal of catching up for our pupils to be at national expected levels. Our personalised approach and targeted interventions can support accelerated progress for some. However, reading is still an area of focus as around half of pupils are behind here. Many are on 1:1 reading support programmes. Thank you so much to those parents and carers who read with their children at home. This is a tremendous help. Handwriting is steadily improving. Our work to develop the curriculum continues. In this Covid year we have made use of "Purple Mash" a step-by-step IT based teaching programme to support remote and blended learning. Newton's Walk has remained open throughout Covid but some parents elected to keep their child at home. Since the return to school, we have been heavily engaged in a catch- up programme.

### To ensure our pupils are prepared for their next stage of learning

Transition to next stages in learning has been very different this year and re integration of pupils back into a mainstream school has only recently begun. Whenever one of our pupils moves on to another school, we continue to track their progress and provide support to all involved for quite some time afterward. It is very important that this process is a success for all parties.

### To further improve behaviour and attendance to support learning.

Numbers have been much lower this year, as pupils have not been excluded from mainstream schools in the same way. The resulting smaller groups have supported many pupils attending school. However, anxiety around Covid has presented an emotional challenge for many and thus, as we have returned to school, we have focussed on re establishing of our ground rules. Attendance rates have been running at around 9% lower, but are now picking up again.

**Continue to develop rigorous processes to ensure that the Teaching over Time judgement is robust and quality of teaching continues to improve so that all teaching is good or better**

The quality of teaching in the school is at least good. We have an annual plan to support and develop our staff to continually improve. This year some of these plans have had to go on hold

The Leadership of the school form their judgement on the quality of teaching and learning on monitoring short term planning, lesson visits and work scrutiny. External verification of the quality of teaching is gained from the Executive Head and our Local Authority School Improvement Partner.

**Continue to review aspects of the Newton's Walk provision to ensure our school vision can be delivered in terms of curriculum staffing, accommodation and value for money**

Our SHINE vision permeates all that we do at Newton's Walk and is the bedrock of our ethos and culture. Governors are constantly monitoring that this vision is a reality.

Work has been going on this year to develop the curriculum and tracking system bringing this in line with the Kingsmead Management Information System. This in the long term will support a really forensic opportunity for tracking and accountability.

Covid prevented our doing much that we do to enrich the educational offer. Such thing as visits and holidays. Visitors have had to go on hold.

The Governor Resources Committee continue to monitor site security and are provided with detailed reports on all aspect of security, Health and safety and safeguarding on a very regular basis by the school.

**To achieve a balanced budget and financial sustainability**

The drop in pupil numbers has resulted in a fall in income and has required a restructure across the whole provision. Whilst a balanced budget has been set, without the changes it would not have been achievable. Moving forward we need to monitor our budget very carefully and work with the LA to determine and shape the provision for the city.

**Continue to develop the effectiveness of governance**

Governance of the school remains strong and we have been really supported in our role by the Leadership Team and all staff. In April we managed, remotely, to have our annual Governor day when governors had an opportunity to look at areas they may require additional information on, or to have time to look at aspects of school life they may not normally have time for in meetings. This is an invaluable opportunity, for which we thank staff. Governors are always amazed at the commitment and humbled by the dedication of our staff.

Over the year, we have both lost and gained governors, but remain confident in the commitment of the board and our clerk to champion the needs of our pupils.

**Covid 19 – Establish protocols to ensure that our school community is supported. That the shape of the day, curriculum structure, staffing and sites provide a safe learning environment. Embed robust business continuity plans to ensure our school community is prepared for future crises**

Throughout this evaluation the impact of Covid has been highlighted.

Work pertaining to this objective, yet to be mentioned are:

Carrying out all Risk Assessments expected by the DfE

Changing or adding addendum's to various policies, e.g. Safeguarding use of IT, Health and Safety, Business Continuity, etc.

Adjusting staffing and the use of bases to manage staff absences and reduce the number of bases open to the minimum

Adjusting and enhancing cleaning cycles

Adjusting our Risk Register

Working closely with staff to monitor well being

The questionnaires completed by stakeholders are evidence of the confidence staff have in their working environment.

As is ever the case in a crisis, stars are born and the unsung stars in our case are the Site Manager and his team who worked over and above to ensure the safety of everyone.

Thank you

### **Our Priorities for the coming year 2021- 2022**

Governors have decided that the objectives set for 2020/21 continue to have great relevance for our direction of travel and reflect the areas we intend to focus on to secure further school improvement.