



The Catch-Up Academy

Virtual tutoring
programme for children
whose education has been
disrupted by Covid-19

**We Inspire, Skill and Mobilise young people
to enable them to live brighter futures**

The Catch-Up Academy - ensuring no child is left behind

The most vulnerable children are being hit the hardest

For tens of thousands of children and young people in the UK, the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent closures of schools has presented a set of unique disruptive challenges that could have a lifelong negative impact on their futures.

All pupils, teachers and their parents have had to adapt to a new way of teaching and learning but issues of remote access, finding a suitable place to study, availability of teachers, parental support and the differing experiences of home learning have been particularly challenging for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Educational inequality was already rising before the pandemic. The Education Policy Institute recently reported that the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers has stopped closing for the first time in a decade. Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds in England are 18.1 months of learning behind their peers by the time they finish their GCSEs – the same gap as five years ago. While the gap at primary school is increasing for the first time since 2007.

But, with the interruption to learning caused by COVID-19, the gap is set to widen further. The Institute for Fiscal Studies reported that, since schools closed, children from better-off families have been spending 30 per cent more time on home learning than poorer children. They have access to more resources, such as private tutoring or conversations with teachers. They have a better home set-up for distance learning and their parents report feeling more able to support them.

Only 51% of low-income households have home internet access compared with 99% of households with an income of over £40,001

In areas with the highest rates of the virus in the UK, such as the North West of England, as many as 4 in 10 secondary pupils were unable to attend school during October

One in five secondary state school pupils in England missed school in the last week of November (2020), with worsening disruption predicted as we head to the Christmas break. The latest attendance figures show 22% of secondary pupils were missing – up from 17% the previous week. With some of the most deprived areas in the UK suffering the highest Covid infection rates (eg, Blackburn with Darwen), it is not a surprise to see worse school attendance and more closures in these places.

Unless we act now to offer extra support to children who are already playing 'catch-up', there will be a measurable, negative impact on educational attainment by the most disadvantaged. This impact on these young people's life prospects could be immense and lasting.

That is why the Aldridge Foundation is raising funds to support The Catch-Up Academy. A virtual tutoring programme aimed at providing high-quality, tailored support to help children and young people to 'catch-up and recover' from the educational setbacks of the pandemic.

The Aldridge Foundation is providing £126,000 to enable a pilot of the Catch-Up Academy across eight schools to begin in January 2021. However, this will only allow us to reach 330 students. Our goal is to extend the pilot to reach around 1,000 students of the 7,000 we support each year. To do that, we need your help to raise an extra £250,000. Please read on to find out how your support could help.

The Catch-Up Academy Pilot - January to June 2021

A pilot for the Catch-Up Academy will run from January 2021 up until GCSE exams in June. The initial focus will be to support up to 330 Year 11 students to reach their GCSE goals in English and Mathematics with free, weekly, tailored, virtual tutoring sessions. Priority will be being given to students facing the most disadvantage.

If we are able to raise an extra £250,000, it will enable us to support even more young people (up to 1,000) during the pilot, **who need help right now**. They might include more students in critical exam years or those who have fallen the furthest behind. It will also enable us to maximise the opportunity to learn and further develop the support offering with the aim of rolling out the Catch-Up Academy by September 2021 to all students who need extra support.

Our goal is to make sure **no child is left behind**. We do not want to see a generation of children, already facing more disadvantages than others, set back further because of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. We want to help them retake control of their futures and where they want to be.

Core objectives

The tutoring sessions will consist of 1-hour, online lessons delivered on weekday evenings and at weekends with groups of three students per class. During school holidays, children can top up their studies through 'holiday bootcamps' to keep up their learning.

The high-quality tutoring will be tailored and provided by a specialist team of tutors currently being recruited. All will have a strong track record in ensuring success in Maths and English.

Enrolment, attendance and progress will be tracked through an online system. This information will be shared with teachers to ensure a joined-up approach to learning and to plan effectively for each student's needs.

- ❖ To provide free, high-quality, virtual tutoring in English and Maths for 330 students in Year 11 to close learning gaps
- ❖ To extend this pilot to up to 1,000 students in all Years who need support the most
- ❖ To prioritise access for students with the highest disadvantage, bridging the barriers to academic and employment success
- ❖ To track detailed progress to identify where gaps are closing and to capture pilot learnings for further roll-out

- ❖ Same tutor each week to offer consistency, build trust and relationship
- ❖ Regular reminders and progress updates to families to support attendance
- ❖ Follow-up sessions with families and schools including safeguarding and E-safety advice
- ❖ Guidance and help on supporting students at home with their studies and exams
- ❖ Extra support if needed for individual students or families, including access to technology

Student engagement and support

It is essential that we provide sufficient support to help students fully participate and engage with the extra help on offer. Tutors will work closely with school staff including family liaison teams, to ensure that any barriers to engagement are addressed.

We will continue to listen to feedback and monitor the progress of students. We want to understand the effectiveness of the virtual academy and, where needed, we will modify our programme, develop further solutions, and tailor our support for those that need it the most.

We urgently need to raise an extra £250,000 so we can help more children to catch up and ensure no child is left behind. If you would like to know how you can help, please contact Shona Nichols, CEO, at shona.nichols@aldridgefoundation.com.

Who are we?

The Aldridge Foundation is a UK-based charity that aims to inspire and equip young people, aged 16-25, with the skills they need to take control of their futures, improve their attainment in education, enjoy better employment prospects and lead productive lives.

Every year we support 7,000 children from disadvantaged communities, with 40% belonging to families with a net income of less than £7,400. We believe that by raising the aspirations, ambitions and skills of young people, they will have the ability to **create better life chances for themselves and become catalysts for positive change in their communities.**

We work with children who live in places in the top 20% deprived areas in the UK



We currently work with young people across nine schools in the North West, Inner London and the South coast. In those schools up to 55% are eligible for pupil premium, up to 46% for free school meals and on average 25.2% of the children do not speak English as a first language. Now, some of these areas, like Darwen, are facing some of the highest rates of Covid-19 in the UK. Tottenham and North Kensington have some of the highest rates in London.

Just 12% of young people in higher education are from disadvantaged backgrounds. This is no surprise when you realise that by the time disadvantaged students leave primary school, they are around nine months behind their peers. This gap increases as students get older; when disadvantaged students leave secondary school, they are around 18 months behind their peers. This effect continues throughout a young person's life, with disadvantaged young people twice as likely to not be in education, employment, or training and earning 10% less than their peers.

At the Aldridge Foundation, we believe that **where you come from should not dictate where you are going.** We want to give disadvantaged young people enriching experiences and support that will help level the playing field when it comes to confidence, life skills and opportunities. Helping them realise their potential at school and beyond.

What we do

Our core programmes help develop the key life and employability skills of young people, supporting their next steps into further education and the world of work.

We work directly with schools to provide the kind of extra-curricular support that can be vital to a child's progress in education and on to employment.

Of all our students, 95% stay on in education following completion of year 11, a growing number are securing university places, professional apprenticeships, starting their own businesses and creating rewarding, productive careers.

Inspire

Providing experiences to broaden the horizons of young people to life outside of their local communities, and to a wider world of opportunities.

Skill

Delivering hands-on initiatives to build core life and employability skills incrementally, throughout a young person's life at school.

Mobilise

Providing information, resources, experiences and support to help young people take the next steps beyond school and into work or further education.