



Reaching for the Stars!

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6.9.2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

Homework

We have reviewed our Homework Policy and have decided to make a number of changes to the way in which we give homework in Key Stage 2. The setting of homework for primary school children has always been a contentious issue. Some parents like homework being set each week, whilst others find it creates a lot of stress and tension in the home trying to get it completed. The issue of the effectiveness of homework has been extensively researched with limited results. There is stronger evidence that it is helpful at secondary level amongst older pupils who are able to self-regulate their learning and who have more background knowledge to draw upon, but much less evidence of any significant benefit to pupils at primary level. Indeed, evidence suggests that at primary school level there are two things which make the greatest difference to pupils' attainment linked to home learning: **1. Reading regularly with an adult and discussing what you have read and 2. Regular times table practice.**

Given the above, we have decided to make some adjustments to the way in which we give homework by focusing on mainly reading and instant recall of times table facts. As such, there will be a much **greater emphasis on reading** as a homework task in order to reflect the importance of this subject. As a school, we are really trying to promote the idea of every children reading 'a book a week'. Children will be expected to read at least 3 times per week with an adult and this must be recorded in your child's planner. This will be monitored on a weekly basis by your child's class teacher/teaching assistant and rewarded using our new bookmark incentive scheme. In addition, children will be expected to complete a book review/book journal about the book which they have read each week - this is important as it will enable your child's teacher/teaching assistant to check that your child has understood what they have read and are able to talk about their reading in a meaningful way.

The second emphasis for homework will be **rapid recall of times tables**. The rapid recall of number facts is the foundation for virtually every aspect of primary. Without a good knowledge of number facts, then progress in these areas is always going to be slow. The

teaching and learning of number facts can be greatly enhanced with the support of parents and carers as part of children's home learning. Even a few minutes spent learning and recalling number facts three times a week will make a huge difference to your child. In order to support parents in this task, I have attached a copy of a tables card which we use in school to record attainment and achievement. Parents may be keen to give your own awards on this copy. The criteria that should be met for an award to be given (bronze, silver, gold and platinum) are written on each card. In order to practise rapid recall of tables, tables could be chanted, learnt as songs or action rhymes. Copy writing tables is another approach which may not appear very exciting, but children do often quite like the practice of doing it. Teachers will carry out weekly times tables tests to ensure that children are regularly learning their tables and they will also give a short activity for children to complete at home to reinforce the times table which they are learning in class.

Weekly spelling lists will also still be given to reinforce spelling patterns and rules learnt in class and to learn how to spell key words. Children will be expected to learn their spellings using the 'Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check' method and these will be tested each week in class.

Year 6

In order to prepare our Year 6 pupils for secondary school and for their SATs tests at the end of the year, Year 6 pupils will be given an additional piece of written homework each week (either comprehension, SPaG or Maths). In addition, they will be given more homework after Christmas to prepare them for their SATs in May. This will only apply to our Year 6 pupils.

Finally, may I remind parents that your child's Planner contains a wealth of useful information to support your child with their learning at home. Many thanks for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

K.Brookes - Deputy Head teacher.