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Dear Parents

Home Learning

At Holmbush we take our responsibility to encourage children to become lifelong learners very seriously, and, as such, appreciate and value learning done outside of school.

Over the last few years we have reviewed our home learning policy and requirements carefully and regularly. Our current fortnightly home learning practice requires a great deal of work for staff and generates stress for some parents. It has also, unfortunately, had little impact on the children's progress academically. These outcomes are unacceptable.

As a staff and governing body we have looked carefully at our current practice, and feel the positive aspects that we wish to retain are:

- Parents understanding what children are learning in school
- Developing a love of reading and enjoyment of books in all children
- Improving spelling of common words and knowledge of tricky spelling patterns
- Practising times tables and becoming fluent at quick number recall and spotting number patterns
- Having the chance to consolidate number skills by playing a maths game at home

Some of the negative aspects have been:

- Children feeling worried or stressed about homework
- Parents battling to get homework completed
- Teachers not having enough time to mark homework due to a quick turnaround and late homework
- Homework not being completed or being completed by others
- Homework not being completed to the same standard as school work

Our community have widely conflicting views about homework. Some would like to see more, some like project work and others would prefer little or none. We are not going to be able to please everybody.

Therefore, a decision has been made to stop the fortnightly setting of homework. We would, however, still like children to read regularly, at least 4 times a week, and for their reading progress to be recorded in their reading cards. This is extremely valuable to us, and is looked at in every Guided Reading session. Children will also be picked randomly in class on a weekly basis to talk to their peers about a book they are enjoying. Spelling and handwriting will also be sent home by staff, as required, and this will match each child's individual needs and largely be in line with the expectations for their age group. We would also like all children to have the opportunity to continue practising number skills, and aim for all children to become fluent in their times tables before Y6. We hope that by setting more individualised homework that children will be able to improve the skills needed to make progress in school, whilst also having time for quality experiences with family and friends. Staff will also be able to concentrate their efforts where they are most needed.

We will, of course, continue to value projects, facts and information the children bring in about their class learning journey, and will praise and reward those efforts in school.

If you feel your child has particular needs that you can address at home, please liaise with their class teacher.

Thank you for your support.

The Governing Body