Learning the
Multiplication Facts (Times Tables)

Dear Parents,

Did you know that **'Times Tables'**, are now referred to as the '**Multiplication Facts'** (it takes a while to break this old habit!) We now prefer the term **'multiplication facts'**, as this name gives more meaning to what we are learning to do; that is, **multiplying!**

Across the school, we have been focusing on improving student knowledge of the Multiplication Facts (up to 10 x 10). **Senior Students in Years 3-6 are required to learn their basic multiplication facts**, up to 10 x 10. That's **121 basic facts** in all.

There are some differences to our approach, compared to when we learnt the 'times tables' by chanting and rote learning. Today, we want the students to **think** about **efficient strategies** to work out the answers.

You might remember the days when Maths lessons started with chanting of times tables facts, for example, *once times 3 is 3, two times 3 is 6, three times 3 is 9* and so on!

Students now learn the number facts by engaging in activities to promote **number sense** and a range of ***strategies***.

We have adopted **the '*Mfacts121'* approach (see mfacts121.com)**. It's an online resource which can be used at **home and at school**. It follows four principles:

1) **Concept**: We work in class to understand the **concept of multiplication**, particularly through the use of arrays.

2) **Strategy**: how do you solve, for example, 6 x 4? Maybe you thought of **5 x** 4 = 20 and then added an extra 4?
We want to lead students towards understanding several efficient strategies, not just memorising the answers. The best way to understand such strategies is to check out the short **Mfacts121 Strategy Videos** (you can log on to mfacts121.com with your child's individual log in). These videos explain key strategies which are used over Year 3-Year 6.

3) **Practise:** Practise is necessary for students to master their facts! The **Mfacts121 resource,** divides the multiplication facts into **four levels**. No longer are the facts in 'tables' format. Students can concentrate on **one level at a time**. They will **feel proud** each time they master a level and move onto the next. Each student has an individual log in for **mfacts121.com. T**hey can log on, practise, assess themselves and check their own progress. The facts are grouped into **red, then green, yellow** and finally **blue** levels.

4) **Fast recall:** The final aim is still the same- to achieve **fast recall** of the **multiplication facts**.

How can you help at home?

Please ask your child to show you how they can **log onto mfacts121.com** at home. Your help is so important. Practising the facts will cement the strategies and allow your child to become faster. There are **cards and activities that you can print** from **mfacts121.com.**

*Try to keep it **fun and positive** and allow your child to progress through the levels at their own pace. Thorough and lasting knowledge is **more important**. So is a **healthy attitude** to Maths! Keep encouraging effort. We now know that effort and a positive mindset is key to achievement. Have fun with it!*

Every child is **different** and we understand they will progress through learning their multiplication facts at different paces. We encourage you to be **patient and work gradually** with your child. The more thorough we are, the more beneficial and long lasting the results will be.

Please **ask your child about their thinking**- ask "How did you work that out?" or "How did you know?", as this gives them the message that we value mathematical thinking, as well as being able to give the answers.

More ideas:

- Display the sets of multiplication facts that your child is learning (red, green, yellow or blue)
- Vary the order you ask them
- Discuss strategies (see below). Please ask your child '**how did you work that out**?' or 'H**ow did you know**?'
- Notice everyday opportunities to use multiplication

These are examples of the **strategies** we will be working on in class. Students will also be able to come up with some of their own strategies.

STRATEGIES (examples):

- Twos Facts: 2 x _ = Think 'double'
- Threes Facts: 3 x _ = Think 'double, plus one more group'
- Tens Facts: 10 x _ = Think 'make it 10 times bigger with a zero'
- Make Connections: Think 'use what you know, to help with what you don't know'

It is really important that students **know their Multiplication Facts and understand the principles of multiplication,** especially by the time they enter Secondary School. They form the basis of so much future learning. Learning these facts helps students build a **positive self-image** of themselves as a learner.

Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher with any questions or comments you may have.

Thank you in anticipation of your support. **Your involvement really does make a difference!**

Kind Regards,

Teaching Staff