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Dear Parents,

I am writing to let you know about some key changes to our homework structures which will take immediate effect.

The staff and governors at Little Stoke Primary School understand and appreciate the value of strong links between home and school and value the important role parents have in encouraging their children's learning out of school. We also understand that encouraging children to complete their homework can be quite stressful sometimes and we are keen to minimize this stress. From term 5, we will be focusing homework on just three key areas. These are all key skills which children need regular and repeated practice in. These areas will be:

1. Reading

There is indisputable evidence that children who read for pleasure at home, become more fluent readers, much earlier. Reading opens doors for children and creates possibilities which may otherwise not be available. The key way that children improve their reading is by reading!

We would encourage Reception, years 1 and 2 to read at home for 10-15 minutes every day. In key stage 2 this should increase to 15-20 minutes. Of course, what we would hope is that children would catch the reading bug and would want to read for much longer, but this is a minimum amount. Once children have moved onto being free readers they can read to themselves rather than aloud to an adult although it is also good to read aloud from time to time, however good your reading is.

Learning to read is the single most important skill that children master at school. Your role in supporting your child cannot be over stated.

Linked with this, Mrs Glover has redesigned the reading diaries to inspire children to begin more regular reading at home. The emphasis will be on encouraging children to develop a love of reading, seeing this as a journey of discovery. All teachers will be launching these reading diaries this week with themed certificates for children to earn at regular stages. Please talk to your children about this and encourage them to do their reading homework by finding a quiet place and putting aside a short amount of time to read regularly.

2. Spelling

We will be returning to sending home weekly spellings for years 1-6 or work associated with specific spelling patterns or phonics. Sometimes this may be in the form of a word list to learn (including the statutory word lists for each year group) and sometimes it may be practicing a particular spelling rule. Word lists will be differentiated depending on children's abilities. Your children will not bring home words to learn which they cannot read or understand. Reception will also have phonics practice on a regular basis.

You can help children to learn spellings by using the Look, Cover, Write, Check method:

Look carefully at the work, cover it up and then try to write it down without looking. Finally check using your list and see whether you have spelt it right. Repeat this process several times for each word.



3. Basic Maths Skills

Children in years 1-6 will bring home one maths piece of homework a week. This will always be linked to key number skills such as times tables and number bonds for example. In addition to this paper based learning, children can also practice their multiplication tables online using TT Rock Stars.

Reading can be done on any days but Maths and Spelling will be sent home every Wednesday in all year groups with the exception of EYFS.

Our policy is never to send home any work which is new to children. All homework will be reinforcement of work they have already covered in class and will be appropriate to the children's ability level. Do see your child's class teacher if you have any concerns about the pitch of the homework your child has to complete or if homework time becomes a difficult, stressful time at home.

Miss Morrison, who works in school, has offered to run a homework club every Thursday after school. This will begin in term 6, straight after school finishing at 4.15. This is completely free and simply offers a place within school for children to finish their maths and spelling homework or spend some time reading. The adults will be available to help with any problems and we will give children a cold drink and biscuits during the session.

If you have any questions regarding these changes, please come in and ask myself, Mr Jelf or your child's class teacher.

Please let us know by completing the form below if you would like your children to attend the homework club on Thursdays and whether you will be meeting them or allowing them to walk home on their own.

I would like my child _____ Year _____

to attend homework club on Thursdays. I will let you know if they are unable to attend.

At 4.15 I will collect them from school.

At 4.15 they will walk home on their own

Signed _____

