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**St Kevin’s Primary School**

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**Homework Policy**

**June 2023**

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**Rationale**

As a result of declining participation in homework and both staff and parental concerns about current research into the impact/benefits of homework for Primary age pupils; a parent and staff consultation was launched in November 2022 to gather research evidence and views of stakeholders.

**Staff research found that The Education Endowment Fund suggests that homework in Primary schools has a positive impact on children’s learning with an average +3 month gain**.

* The quality of the task set appears to be more important than the quantity of work required from each pupil.
* The impact of homework diminishes as the amount of time pupils spend on it increases.
* The highest impact was found where homework is set twice a week in a particular subject.
* Homework related to learning in class is most effective, particularly where it is an integral part of learning, rather than an add-on.
* Maximum impact can be seen when pupils receive quality feedback on their work.
* Families facing disadvantage may be less likely to have a quiet working space, less likely to have access to devices suitable for learning and may receive less parental support to complete homework and develop effective learning habits. These difficulties may lead to an increase in the attainment gap for some pupils.

**Parents’/Carers’ and Guardians’ responses were analysed and are summarised below**:

* Most respondents feel the amount of homework given – between 10 and 40 minutes was ‘about right’.
* Respondents feel the most beneficial homework tasks are Reading, Sumdog, spelling and maths tasks.
* 43% of respondents asked that homework should remain with a change of the amount or approach, 33% of respondents suggested that homework be abolished and 24% of respondents wish to keep homework as it is.
* Some respondents highlighted the demands of other clubs and activities after school and that homework can be a source of stress within the family home.
* Two thirds of respondents would like to keep homework but with a change to the amount or approach.
* Whilst the majority of parents/carers think the amount of homework is about right, a significant minority feel it is too much and so there may be some support to reduce the number or frequency of homework tasks.
* Support for homework is strongest in the early and upper stages – and weakest in the middle years.
* Creative tasks and challenges appear to be considered least helpful and it was noted that these can require resources not always available to families.

**St Kevin’s Homework Policy**

* The main focus for homework will be **Reading, spelling**, **Phonics** and **Maths**.
* All homework set should **well-designed and linked to class learning**.
* Children should not spend any longer than **10/15 minutes at P1 – 3** and no longer than **30 minutes at P4 -7 per evening**.
* Homework provided should focus on the **consolidation** of learning already undertaken in the classroom.
* Homework tasks will be added to **pupil diaries** for ease of access.
* A homework jotter will be provided where necessary.
* Homework tasks are most beneficial and have the greatest impact when undertaken with a supporting adult i.e. reading, flashcards or oral spelling, mental agility, oral counting or multiplication tables at senior stages.
* Homework tasks will be sent home on a **Monday** to be returned, signed by an adult on Friday. (where possible)
* Homework will help parents/carers to understand the learning taking place from week to week.
* **Teachers may allocate additional home learning tasks in agreement with parents, where it may provide short term support to overcome difficulties in class.**
* ALL homework diaries should be **signed weekly by parents/carers.**
* ALL homework diaries will be **signed by the class teacher** on a weekly basis.
* ALL written tasks will be **marked by the class teacher and quality feedback given**.
* School staff will consider and address any **barriers** to completing homework by offering **access to resources** required.
* Homework **challenges will be considered optional** and seek to motivate and challenge children with an interest in those areas ie App design challenge, Digital challenge, Creative challenges or STEM challenges.

**Homework Guidance**

**Reading**

Reading tasks may include-

* Reading for Enjoyment – Read, Listen or Watch
* Reading for Information – Research and note taking
* Class reading books
* Before, During and After Reading tasks
* Exploring sounds, letters and words
* Close reading and or comprehension tasks to develop understanding.

**Spelling and Phonics**

* Spelling words/focus spelling rule will be issued on a weekly basis
* P1 – 3 phoneme of the week will be issued on a weekly basis.
* Spelling strategies should be the main focus for learning and may take the form of oral tasks or in infant classes (P1-3) quick recall flashcards and/or word formation.
* P4- 7 may occasionally be asked to use spelling words within a context to support understanding of new vocabulary.

**Numeracy and maths**

* Teachers will set out the class/group learning for the week in diary overview on a Monday, this allows parents to keep track of class learning and support learning naturally within the family home through practical tasks and context appropriate discussion. i.e. counting household items, time, weight etc.
* P1 and P2 pupils are given consolidation packs in line with the Stages of Early Arithmetical Learning (SEAL), these packs support mental agility and require the support of an adult.
* Written Maths tasks or homework sheets may be sent home for completion when appropriate – this will ideally be twice per week in line with EEF research suggesting twice per week has maximum impact.
* Sumdog Maths app is purchased on an annual basis and every child has an account, this is available to use at any time and demonstrates significant gains in maths levels for those pupils accessing regularly. Teachers may set specific tasks to consolidate class learning within Sumdog for homework if and when required.