



Valley Primary School

GROWING AND LEARNING TOGETHER TO BE THE BEST WE CAN BE!

ASPIRE...ENJOY...ACHIEVE...CHALLENGE!

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Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to inform you that from September we plan to change our approach to Home Learning. As you all know, it is really important that the children are learning both at school and at home and we are keen to ensure we work closely together to ensure parents have some key meaningful tasks to complete at home to help your child develop their learning further.

Following feedback from parents and after reviewing much research completed by professionals about the value of homework, we will no longer set weekly specific written English and Maths homework. This will allow children to focus their time at home on the key tasks below which we believe will be more valuable.

HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES.

REGULAR KEY SKILLS PRACTICE:

ENGLISH.

1) Reading— it is crucial your child reads most nights. This can just be a small amount but will really help them develop their skills and widen their vocabulary and understanding. It is very helpful if you can ask them to discuss their reading or ask them specific questions about what they have read. It is also important your child reads for pleasure or hears stories read to them which they enjoy alongside their specific targeted reading books. Stickers are given at different points for reaching specific milestones as noted in the children's reading diaries.

WE EXPECT EVERY CHILD TO READ AT LEAST 3 TIMES PER WEEK FOR A MINIMUM OF 10 MINUTES EACH TIME AND FOR THIS TO BE NOTED IN THEIR READING DIARIES.

2) Spellings/ Phonics Sounds and Common Exception Words- it is vital your child practises these to help them develop their vocabulary skills, accuracy and confidence when writing / decoding.

All children will be in a spelling group linked to their Quest Castle. Each week they will focus on a spelling rule and have a list of words which use that rule to help them practice. Children will be given an activity to apply a selection of these on a Friday and will be rewarded for learning the key rule with a charm on their Spelling Quest Sheet.

Alongside this, they will have Wizard Words which are common exception words they should practise throughout the term ready for their Wizard Word Activity to test these at the end of term.

WE EXPECT EVERY CHILD TO PRACTICE THEIR SPELLINGS/ PHONICS/ WIZARD WORDS IN DIFFERENT WAYS AT LEAST 3 TIMES PER WEEK FOR A MINIMUM OF 5 MINUTES EACH TIME.

In Reception, Year 1 and for some Year 2 children, an additional phonics sheet will be sent home to practice each sound.

WE EXPECT EVERY CHILD TO PRACTICE THIS DAILY AND REWARDS WILL BE GIVEN FOR COMPLETING THIS/ LEARNING THE SOUND. THIS SHOULD TAKE APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES IN TOTAL SPLIT ACROSS THE WEEK.

MATHS.

- 3) KIRFs – Key Instant Recall Facts. Each half term, we choose a different focus and ask you to help us to encourage your child to learn their instant recall facts. We test the children at the start and the end of the half term and hope to see an improvement. We use the 6 second rule set by the government for the Time Tables Test to define whether recall is instant so please do encourage your child to answer quickly.

WE EXPECT EVERY CHILD TO PRACTICE THEIR KIRF AT REGULAR INTERVALS THROUGHOUT THE WEEK RESULTING IN A MINIMUM OF 15 MINUTES PRACTICE WITH THIS.

- 4) Target Skill Practice – your child will be set specific targets to achieve with their Maths Skills. These will be different depending on your child's year group.

In Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4 these will be set on Time Table Rock Stars.

In Year 5 and Year 6 these will be set on Mathletics.

WE EXPECT EVERY CHILD TO PRACTICE THEIR TARGET SKILLS FOR AT LEAST 30 MINUTES EACH WEEK, THIS CAN BE IN ONE SESSION OR SPLIT INTO TWO.

PLEASE NOTE: THIS TOTALS 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES KEY SKILLS HOME LEARNING TIME PER WEEK.

WIDER CURRICULUM AND LIFE SKILLS OPTIONAL HALF TERMLY ACTIVITIES:

- 1) Topic Home Learning Projects – A choice of suggested cross curricular tasks will be sent home at the beginning of each topic. Please encourage your child to complete as many tasks as possible ensuring a minimum of one per country to ensure they travel around the world each half term.

WE ENCOURAGE ALL CHILDREN TO BRING IN THEIR WORK FOR THEIR CLASS TO CELEBRATE ON A FRIDAY. EACH PIECE OF COMPLETED WORK WILL BE REWARDED WITH ONE ENTRY INTO THE BIG PRIZE DRAW. EACH CHILD WHO TRAVELS AROUND THE WORLD WITHIN THE HALF TERM WILL RECEIVE 10 ADDITIONAL ENTRIES FOR THE BIG PRIZE DRAW. THE MORE ENTRIES YOUR CHILD GETS THE MORE CHANCE THEY HAVE OF WINNING IN OUR END OF THE YEAR BIG PRIZE DRAW.

- 2) Life Skills Activities – A focus Life Skill will be set each half term and your child is encouraged to try and show this during the half term.

WE ENCOURAGE ALL CHILDREN TO BRING IN EVIDENCE OF THIS FOR THEIR CLASS TO CELEBRATE ON A FRIDAY. EACH HALF TERM A CHILD WILL BE CHOSEN AS THE LIFE SKILLS CHAMPION FOR THE CLASS. THE WINNER WILL RECEIVE A GOLD STAR PIN BADGE.

- 3) Curious Challenges and Brain Boosters – As part of our Feel Good Friday, a suggested Curious Challenge and Brain Booster are set each week for your child to choose to complete at home if they wish. We also set one Deeper Thinking Question each week. These all focus on good Mental Health.

WE ENCOURAGE ALL CHILDREN TO BRING IN EVIDENCE OF THIS FOR THEIR CLASS TO CELEBRATE ON A FRIDAY. EACH HALF TERM A CHILD WILL BE CHOSEN AS THE MENTAL HEALTH CHAMPION FOR THE CLASS. THE WINNER WILL RECEIVE A SMILEY FACE PIN BADGE.

PLEASE NOTE: THERE IS NO SET AMOUNT OF TIME FOR OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES AS THEY WILL TAKE DIFFERENT AMOUNTS OF TIME DEPENDING ON THE ACTIVITY AND ALTHOUGH STRONGLY ENCOURAGED, THESE ARE PURPOSELY OPTIONAL AND INCLUDE CHOICE TO ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENT LEARNING.

TARGETED WORK:

Groups of children, specific year groups and individuals may be given specific targeted work at certain times of the year. This will be communicated with parents individually and may include specific SATs practice, individual target work from Needs Based plans etc.

REAL LIFE MATHS / TRANSITION HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES:

Each break, a practical holiday activity focusing on Real Life Maths will be set following their learning in Maths in class. This will aim to allow application of school learning in a more practical real life setting.

A transition project/ activities will be set each summer to help your child with transition between classes. Part of this will be research based on their new class name. Our class names are linked to a different area of the curriculum in each year group and named after a British Inspirational person.

COMPETITIONS:

Alongside the above regularly set activities, we will also periodically introduce competitions or activities linked to special events or national days to increase awareness of particular issues or motivate the children to practice a particular skill. These will be notified by via Parent Pay, your child's MS Teams account or the weekly school newsletter. Please encourage your child to participate in these as appropriate.

ACTIVITIES ON OUR SCHOOL WEBSITE:

We also have our Children's section of our school website which has numerous home activity ideas, additional helpful information such as recommended reading and a learning zone with recommended website links. This can be accessed via the link below:

<https://www.valleyprimaryschool.co.uk/topic/children>

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to support the best possible learning and skills practice opportunities for our children. We hope to offer a homework club option from September too if you child does not have access to a device and/or finds concentrating at home difficult. Plus we will give opportunity at breaks/ lunch for children who need it to catch up on the compulsory home learning tasks so they don't fall behind with their learning if they cannot complete it at home one week.

We hope this combination of home learning activities will provide the opportunities our children need to support their skills development whilst not overwhelming them and allowing them to enjoy being children!

Yours sincerely

S. J. Milewski.

Susan Milewski.
Headteacher