Rook's Nest Academy

'Caring for Children, Striving For Excellence'

Homework Policy

"For homework, it is up to individual schools to decide whether it is age-appropriate, in line with their policy. Inspectors do not assess homework as part of inspections."

DFE 2 Sept 2019

What research says: The Education Endowment Fund reports that research into homework (read here) has mainly been carried out in relation to secondary schools. There is evidence to suggest schools that give homework perform better, but it is not clear that this is due to the homework itself. In addition, gains in relation to primary aged children are seen to be small.

One benefit of homework is that it can help parents support their children in building positive attitudes towards their education, but it is our belief that this should be balanced with the needs of children to develop other interests and have time to rest.

At Rooks Nest we feel, short focused tasks that link directly to current learning – and on-going retrieval of prior learning linked to gains in long-term memory - are likely to be more effective than regular daily homework that lacks a specific purpose. Taking this into account, homework will follow the activities listed below. It will not be marked as its impact will be seen through pupils' on-going learning in class.

Home Reading:

By far the most vital of all 'homework' activities is reading at home. Helping children to read and developing 'reading for pleasure' is the single most important thing that parents can do to help with their children's education. If possible, reading should be done every day. It is an excellent way to bring 'screen time' to a close and help settle children into a healthy, bedtime routine. Reading can also be linked to current school topics to support interest and understanding.

Reading Scheme Books:

Although your child will be taught to read at school, you can have a huge impact on their reading journey by continuing their practice at home. Each week, from foundation stage throughout Year 1 and into Year 2 children will receive a phonics – supporting reading scheme book.

This book has been carefully matched to your child's current reading level. If your child is reading it with little help, please don't worry that it's too easy – your child needs to develop confidence and fluency in reading.

Listen to them read the book. Remember to give them lots of praise- celebrate their success! If they can't read a word, read it to them. After they have finished, talk about the book together

Phonics

The academy uses the ‘Little Wandle’ phonics scheme. Phonics homework is not formally set however the scheme has a special resources page for parents. On this page will help you support your child with saying their sounds and writing their letters. There are also some useful videos so you can see how they are taught at school and feel confident about supporting their reading at home.

https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/

Library Books:

At Rook’s Nest our children are lucky enough to have weekly access to our well stoked library. In addition to any reading scheme books, children will bring home a library book (colour coded to their ability level). This should be a book that they choose themselves and really interests them. As these books may be more challenging, parents can share the reading or read to their children. A key thing here is that children understand new vocabulary and have a chance to discuss theme, plot and characters with an adult. A reading marker is provided with questions and prompts an adult can give their child.

Accelerated Reader

All children in the school are part of the Accelerated Reader Scheme. This is a comprehension based scheme using reading ‘quizzes’ and termly Star Tests to identify any issues and provide reading ages. The ‘quizzes can be taken most mornings. Quizzes must be taken before a new book is chosen. Accelerated reader can be accessed through the Rook’s Nest Website and quizzes can be completed at home.

Maths Skills:

Fluency in maths skills (e.g. number bonds, times tables, telling the time) is another aspect that can have a big impact on children’s learning. Scientific research has proven that the human brain has limited ‘thinking space’; so storing basic facts in the long-term memory helps when working on difficult problems. We advise that children practise these basic skills until they know them ‘by heart’. School will provide a list of topics each half term through the termly parent flyer (found on the class webpage). Rooks Nest have purchased a number of Educational games can support learning in an engaging and fun way. The main one used in school is ‘Timetables Rockstars’ where children practise speed and fluency of their timetables. Challenging themselves, competing against friends or even in class against class showdowns. Timestables Rockstars can be accessed at home through the Rook’s Nest website.

Spelling:

Children can struggle to learn long lists of spellings. To help, we split the weekly list into weekly chunks often covered as morning activities. These spellings will link to a weekly focus on a spelling rule or pattern, words from the National Curriculum ‘word lists’ and some subject-specific words linked to current topics. Children will be shown how to learn this information by in a variety of ways such as dictation, through their own written work and informal tests (there are no formal weekly spelling tests) ’. The spelling patterns and rules covered for each particular half term can

be found on the child's class pages. Parents can help by checking their children's recall and understanding of these spelling rules.

Additional Tasks:

Where teachers see fit, they may suggest short activities that will develop learning from a lesson or pre-empt a forthcoming lesson. These will often take the form of research to coincide with a new focus subject for that half term.

Year 6 SATS:

During the run up to KS2 SATs Year 6 children will be expected to complete revision homework. This will normally take the form of a revision booklet which compliments the subjects studied that particular week. A timetable of this homework will be provided in the spring term.

After School Activites

At Rooks Nest we encourage and celebrate those activates children take part in their own time. The Academy provides a range of clubs and activities through the year. However from Rugby, Gymnastics and Karate to Cubs, Brownies and Performing arts the list of children's activities to be found in the local area is wide. We believe that sharing and appreciate each other's strengths as well as engaging with new friends in productive fun, environments strengthens all children's confidence and builds independence. In our celebration assemblies we encourage our children to share their successes and inspire other children to take part in these activities.