



PARENT FOCUS MEETING
MINUTES
THURSDAY 7TH MARCH – 2.30PM



Miss Rising welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and said how lovely it was to see so many people.

Home Learning Guidance

We specifically use the term 'Home Learning' as opposed to 'Homework' to describe this activity as we believe the opportunities for learning within the family setting are endless. Children learn so many important skills by watching us as role models. Home Learning is specifically designed to be a different experience from school.

Our approach through the Home Learning activities and Year Group puzzles gives you an insight into what we are covering and ideas of how you can carry out activities to support this at home. We want to continue the positive learning experience at school into the Home Learning being enjoyable and fun and want to provide families with a range of techniques and resources to support active learning.

The Home Learning also supports our 'Model, Practise, Apply' approach where we are embedding skills which have been practised at school and developing independence.

Miss Rising showed an example of a Home Learning sheet and explained that these activities are not taken from a book or from a website. The Teachers at Ewell Grove work as Curriculum teams, each curriculum team has a mixture of teachers across the key stages and we work together to carefully plan these activities. We have looked at our planning, themes and expectations and devised a series of activities to support their learning at school. There are columns for each year group but that does not mean that you have to stay within that year group, for example if you feel your child is excelling you can look at the activity in the next column and likewise the other way. There is no need for the children to do all of the activities but we would encourage them to cover a variety of areas.

Parents are encouraged to give positive feedback about their learning and their progress. Support your child with building their resistance and persistence when developing or practising skills.

Over the years we have come across many different views to Home Learning from some families not wanting any to others wanting something very prescriptive.

A parent asked about feedback on Home Learning once it has been submitted – Miss Rising explained that the children get the opportunity to show and talk about their work in front of their class. Certificates should also be issued by the Class Teacher for their work.

Miss Rising advised that parents should read regularly to their child with a range of familiar and unfamiliar stories. This helps model fluency, pace and intonation whilst using stories that stretch children's vocabulary and imagination. Take this opportunity to talk about the story, discuss the vocabulary and comprehension. There is a tendency for this to stop this once children can read for themselves..... please never stop!

Children should read at least 4 times a week. Reception and KS1 have Letters and Sounds Home Learning every two weeks. Please keep revisiting all the sounds and words given over the weeks, rather than the ones given out that specific week. KS2 have Literacy activities sent home every two weeks and are based on the current learning within the class.

Miss Rising shared the following quote with the parents

Did you know?

*“The **biggest single indicator** of whether a child is going to thrive at school and in work is **whether or not they read for pleasure.**”*

Unesco

*“Experts believe that reading for **10 minutes a day** can make a dramatic difference to **children's attainment.**”*

Oxford University Press

Research suggests that **a rich vocabulary is a strong indicator of reading success and academic achievement:**

*“Reading to children and getting children to read themselves are the basis of **vocabulary growth**, together with engaging children in **rich oral language** and **encouraging reading and talk at home.**”*

Duke and Moses (2003)

Miss Rising asked whether the Year Group puzzles and Virtual Memory Books are used by parents - parents said how lovely it was to have an insight into the activities that the children are doing in school.

A parent asked if we would consider a 'reading buddy' where the older children could spend time reading to the younger children. Following the meeting Miss Rising has set up 'class reading buddies' this involves two classes of different age groups meeting regularly to read in pairs or small groups. This helps to develop confidence, friendship, sharing and enthusiasm for reading.

| CLASS READING BUDDIES |
|---------------------------------|
| Morning Nursery and Otter Class |
| Afternoon Nursery and Fox Class |
| Rabbit and Swan Class |
| Badger and Heron Class |
| Hedgehog and Robin Class |
| Squirrel and Wren Class |

A parent said that they thought the KS2 children would be receiving more Maths work for home. Parents advised that other schools across the borough are using different sources and they do not want to get behind the times. Miss Rising advised that Mr Farrant is currently looking into suitable 'Maths Programs' which can be used at home to support the approach we use at school.

A whole school focus is reasoning and we provide the children opportunities to apply what they have learnt through an activity called 'Captain Conjecture' e.g. in year 1 Captain Conjecture says

That $3 + 4$ is the same as $4 + 3$ is this correct?
Can you show why?
That $8 + 7$ is the same as $7 + 8$ is this correct?
Can you show why?
That $10 - 6$ is the same as $6 - 10$ is this correct?
Can you show why?

We will be developing 'Captain Conjecture' into a regular home learning activity for all year groups. Also we are currently looking into ordering some CGP Maths books and Miss Rising will be asking parents if these would be useful to have as a resource which parents can purchase from the school.

The National Curriculum gives clear indications about the purpose and aims of Maths within the curriculum. Great emphasis is given to the need for children to become fluent with the fundamentals of Maths.

In EYFS the main focus for Maths is understanding the principles of number. It is fundamental that children have a core understanding in number concepts before beginning to work on formal calculations. There is information about the principles of number on the website within the Calculation Policy and the Reception area. These skills should be practised at all stages and it would be useful for families to focus on these principles at home.

The [Calculation Policy](#) is a useful document for parents to refer to and includes examples activities for the children. Within each year group there is an explanation of the expectation and the build it, draw it, write it approach. There is also a list of [Useful Websites to support Home Learning](#).

Understanding of mathematical ideas happens when children make connections between real objects (manipulatives), symbols, language and pictures. This develops cognitive connections which enable children to make sense of new experiences by linking them to previous experiences. Wherever possible practical apparatus should be available for children to use. As they become more confident and flexible in their thinking and they begin to apply their knowledge and understanding they should be taught how to select the most appropriate materials for a task. There should be a clear progression through concrete, pictorial and abstract activities

Maths Workshop – Thursday 21st March, 6.30pm – 8pm

There was a fantastic turnout at the Maths Workshop with parents from Nursery through to Year 4. The focus was on the four operations and the learning journey that your child takes as they develop their skills when solving calculations. Thank you to all the parents that attended this workshop.

Of those that attended 100% said they found the Workshop informative and useful in supporting their children at home. A couple of quotes:

"Useful to understand how the children are taught so I don't confuse them with alternative methods."

"Very informative and helpful for home learning and play"

Online Safety Update

Due to recent events over the last few weeks we have discussed Online Safety with our children and reminded them:

- It is not real
- You are in control
- Block and report
- Don't pass it on
- Check devices and privacy settings

Parents are encouraged to reinforce these practices and messages at home to ensure that we are working collectively on our Internet Safety strategy.

Miss Rising reminded parents of the resources that are available on the school website, these can be found under 'About Us' / 'Online Safety'

Celebration Day and Open Morning

To commemorate our 200 year history as the school at the heart of Ewell Village and celebrate the opening of our new buildings and Primary Status that will enable us to continue to provide village based education for generations of children yet to come we have planned the following events:

Friday 26th April – whole school celebration day:

8:45 am morning whistle and children into school for registration

9:00 am children come out to the playground to perform celebratory activities for parents

9:30 am Parents are invited into school to view classrooms and school hall.

The children will continue the celebrations which will include 'Magic' and a Street Party Lunch.

Saturday 27th April – Our school will be open to the local community who are invited to an Open Morning from 10:00 am to 12:00 Midday. Visit the classrooms, school hall and a 'café' will be available.

The Friends of Ewell Grove will be selling commemorative merchandise.

'Thank you' to the Friends of Ewell Grove'

Miss Rising said 'Thank You' to the Friends of Ewell Grove and to everyone who has supported our fundraising events. We now have a new AV system which we are delighted with – thank you to everyone for all your hard work.

Dates for your diary

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Monday 1 st April | Year 4 Gold Book, 9.10am |
| Tuesday 2 nd April | Year 3 Gold Book, 9.10am |
| Wednesday 3 rd April | Year 2 Gold Book & Birthday Assembly, 9.10am |
| Thursday 4 th April | Reception Gold Book & Birthday Assembly, 9.10am |

Questions raised by parents:

1. Will Ewell Grove start using a 'Virtual Classroom'? Other schools within the area are using virtual classrooms, parents and children within the same class have different log in details. Work, Blogs, debates, films, class bears can all be recorded on these. Are we going to be behind other schools?

As Ewell Grove grows into a Primary School we are committed to using research and best practice to develop our approach to learning and the curriculum. Not doing the same another school does not equate to "being left behind". For example our PSHE and computing curriculum already incorporates 'blogs' and 'debates e.g. in Year 4 the children have held debates relating to the 'Rule of Law' and 'Anglo Saxon Gods'. We will obviously continue to develop how we share and communicate the learning that takes place. However, our website already provides a range of information about the breadth of our curriculum and ways this can be supported at home. Our Curriculum Puzzles, Year Group Meetings, Home Learning & Virtual Yearbooks are examples of how we share with families aspects of the learning that has taken place across a half term. We are currently researching if any on-line resources would also be beneficial and exploring the financial commitment needed to sustain these.

2. Parents asked if more Clubs could be available for the children, they have looked at what other schools offer and they do not feel that there is enough opportunities for the children as well as opportunities for boys. Ideas given were Cooking, Coding, Drama, Karate, Chess, Minecraft. Some of the older have left Choir as they feel it is too 'infant like'. Parents appreciate that there will be higher costs if external companies are used.
Miss Rising feedback that we do have a lot of clubs running and although sometimes a club may only run for 5 weeks at a time we try to repeat the club for a different set of children to ensure as many children as possible have the opportunity to be part of a club. We are currently looking into providing clubs which involve more of an investigative or scientific approach to ensure there are opportunities for a range of interests.
There was also a question about netball club, Miss Herbert and Mrs Waldron have been running a netball club during lunchtimes and this will carry on in the Summer Term. We have been teaching the children the skills involved in netball within PE sessions and within the club. The netball team competitions do not start until Year 5 and we are planning to run the netball club across the whole year in Years 5 and 6. Every child who applied for Netball Club got a place.

The range of clubs we have running in the summer term so far are

Athletics – Year 1

Drumming – Year 2

Dance Festival Club – Years 1 & 2

Football with Gavin – Years 1, 2, 3 & 4

Netball – Years 3 & 4

Drama - Year 3

Drama – Year R

Choir - Year 3 & 4

Lego

Chess

School Council will be carrying out a survey across the school to find out clubs children are interested in taking part in.

3. A parent asked if there is a provision for coats at Old Schools Lane?
Miss Rising explained that there is a changing room where the coats can be stored, the children should be wearing their waterproof coat over their fleeces.
4. A parent asked if there will be an opportunity for a 'forum' that can be focussed around KS2?
Miss Rising suggested that we could have a focus for KS2 at the next meeting and there will also be Year group Meetings in the Summer Term.
5. A parent asked if new events for example, 'Bubble Bursting' could be explained. New parents to the school do not know what these events are so a shorted explanation would be ideal.
Miss Rising agreed that this would be a good idea and we will ensure that events are explained clearly when they are advertised. We will also develop a page with information about our yearly traditions.

Date of next meeting: 13th June 2019