

Dear parents,

Further to the information published in last weeks newsletter I wish to ;

- Outline the general principles of home learning
- Clarify expectations around home learning
- Provide some background information behind the reasons for some of the changes
- Identify some difficulties that you may have in accessing online material

The general principles of home learning

At Taddington we believe parental involvement is fundamental to a child's success at school. Learning is a lifelong process that takes place both at home and in school. We aim to develop this partnership through our Homework. The aims of setting homework in our school are:-

- i) to complement and support work that is being done in school by reinforcing skills and understanding
- ii) to foster a partnership between school and home learning as laid out in the home-school agreement, with relevant support offered for parents where necessary
- iii) to encourage children to be resourceful and to work independently outside the class environment
- iv) to prepare children for the requirements and expectations of transition from one key stage to another.

Expectations around home learning

We understand that parent's may not be able to fully support children with all of the home learning tasks that are set by the teacher. Time constraints, work patterns, and busy lives outside of school may all be valid reasons for home work tasks not being complete. For some parents, there will never be enough home work and for others there will always be too much. As a result we also understand that our approach must sit somewhere in the middle. **As a minimum, we ask that reading and spelling work should be prioritised.**

Parents frequently ask school about ways to support learning at home. Home work tasks are planned to strengthen skills and concepts taught at school.

Attached to this document we have outlined the general expectation and a rough time scale for tasks. This could be viewed as a 'menu'. To reiterate, you or your child may not be able to complete all tasks each week. Reading and spelling are monitored weekly and as such, you may wish to prioritise these areas.

Background information related to some of the changes.

The quantity or variety of homework tasks have not changed.

What has changed?

The way that we communicate homework tasks has moved from paper based to Google Classrooms. MyMaths has been replaced with video sessions and linked worksheets.

What are the reasons behind the change?

MyMaths replaced with video sessions and worksheets

Many parents have told us that they struggle to help children with the methods that are taught in school. The videos help parents as well as children to see a demonstration of the method taught in school. The worksheet links with the video and directly mirrors the lesson taught in school much more so than MyMaths. Again, the videos and worksheets are part of a menu of activities to guide home work or discussion. As with TT Rockstars or Number Bots, you may feel confident in addressing these skills in a different way with your child.

Google Classroom.

Because of COVID the government requires schools to deliver lessons to children absent from school (due to isolation or school closure) in a way that delivers 'as near as possible lessons that would be delivered in class'. Most schools are moving to, or have moved, their remote learning (and homework) onto Google Classrooms to enable this, and are using recorded videos or live streaming classes, **to take as much of the teaching burden off parents as possible**. In doing this it is hoped that no child has to miss out on, or fall behind with, their education. We are doing our best to make sure the children's education continues at a high standard no matter what happens.

We are sorry if initially this appears to be more change and work for parents, but we hope you see we're doing this for the right reasons. These are difficult times for everyone.

As mentioned in the newsletter, we now communicate homework tasks via Google Classrooms so that; pupils, parents and teachers can get used to it well before any potential school closures/isolations. The content/amount of homework is pretty much the same as before, it is just being accessed through different methods.

Some potential difficulties

Digital worksheets

We thrilled that some parents have had a go add writing digitally on the worksheets and uploading these. For others, we understand that this is more difficult. Perhaps a different device or browser requires an additional add on app. We have set up a space where parents may wish to support one another with helpful tips for how to write on and submit the worksheets. [Click this link and post your top tips to support other parents with the process of writing on worksheets.](#) We have also added some of our findings for Amazon Fire devices and apple IOS software.

If you can't find a solution to writing on the worksheets online, some parents have photographed the work and uploaded this to the class drive folder or written the answers out. This is absolutely fine. At this time we are avoiding paper versions of the sheets.

Devices at home

You may have a limited number of devices at home that are able to access the online material. As outlined on the attached timetable, reading and spelling can all take place offline. The maths videos (or phonics sessions in KS1) can be watched on any device and if applicable tasks completed on the paper copies of the worksheet.

Should we be in a position where school is closed or your child is at home for a sustained period of time due to COVID, there may be a greater demand for online work. We will use Google Classrooms to publish video sessions for both Maths and English and again once the videos have been watched, tasks can be completed on paper.

As before, we will be able to loan a maximum of 10 laptops if you feel you are unable to access the videos should school be forced to close.

Wider issues around blending learning (learning during a potential school closure)

Those households that have children in different classes may find accessing the live afternoon meetings difficult if there are limited devices or space for home learning. As mentioned we may be able to loan some families a laptop. We had considered staggering the session times, though it was felt that this may have taken more time for families. The sessions can be accessed on a range of devices and we hope that most children would be able to attend these sessions.

Flexibility.

Should school be closed due to COVID, we will remain flexible. We understand that some families may capitalise on a break in the weather for instance and choose to prioritise a walk or some other activity. As a school we are always adapting and responding to what the children need. We understand that parents will also take this approach. Our live sessions will be scheduled, though we understand that at times, some children may not attend each session.

We understand that change, no matter how slight, may to some feel difficult at this time. Parents can only do what they can do and have time for, but it is hoped that if we all try Google Classrooms and new methods to access remote learning and get used to it now, we can iron out any problems and resolve them before any isolations/closures (if at all) happen.

We understand that for the first few weeks everything might not get done. Everyone takes time to adjust to new things. And the situation is: Do your best. If just one homework task gets completed it is better than none at all. Do what you can.

Yours sincerely,

Mr J. Handley
Headteacher