

Barnes Farm Junior School

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Parent Voice

Mr McIntosh, our Deputy Headteacher, has been running Parent Voice since May 2014 on a monthly basis. Alternating between morning and afternoon sessions, it was created to improve home/school communication and to enable the school to know more accurately what it is getting right and where it needs to improve still further. I would like to thank both Mr McIntosh and the varied parents/carers who have made the commitment to share their views this way. Please find below a brief summary of some of the key areas of feedback and how we have responded. There is also a more in-depth response to the views shared regarding homework. In order to improve this valuable link, we are launching a dedicated e-mail account parentvoice@barnesfarm-jun.essex.sch.uk to allow those parents who can't always attend to make their views heard. I would like to emphasise that we greatly benefit from all forms of feedback, both positive and negative, so please keep in touch!

<i>You said</i>	<i>We did</i>
<i>Could some separate arrangements for changing for PE be introduced? (May 2014)</i>	<i>Separate changing arrangements for Y5/6 have been introduced (Sept 2014)</i>
<i>Can parents run clubs? (June 2014)</i>	<i>Spanish (Oct 2014), Italian and Coding Club (Jan 2015) all set up and run by parents.</i>
<i>Can clubs all finish at the same time? (Oct 2014)</i>	<i>All clubs throughout the year now run to 4:15pm (Oct 2014)</i>
<i>Can children be better informed about daily lunch choices? (Nov 2014)</i>	<i>Menus displayed in every class and stored within register (Nov 2014)</i>

Homework

ParentVoice has recently shared some concerns about the inconsistency of homework being set. In some cases, parents were happy with the regularity and quality but in others they felt it was inconsistently set and in isolated cases, not set at all. In addition, Barnes Farm Junior Parent Surveys have revealed a huge gap in views amongst parents between too little or too much homework being set.

Therefore, we would like to share our approach to this area.

What does the research say?

The hugely important 'Teaching and Learning Toolkit' by the Education Endowment Foundation/Sutton Trust from Spring 2013 examined all the research ever completed into homework. They came to the following conclusions:

- Overall, homework in primary schools does not appear to lead to large increases in learning.
- Effective homework is associated with greater parental involvement and support and can be developed to increase parental engagement.
- Short focused tasks or activities which relate directly to what is being taught, and which are built upon in school are likely to be more effective than regular daily homework.
- The purpose of homework should be made clear to children.

What will we do?

We believe in homework but feel that our approach can be modified to have a greater impact. As we have previously shared with you, we will be changing our homework arrangements in the Summer Term. We will be sharing these with you very soon and these have been based around the principles above.

In the meantime, we have 5 important weeks before the Easter break and homework will continue to be set regularly. This will be recorded in the Learning Habit books.

The teaching staff have reviewed the information below to illustrate this.

	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6
Time per week	1½ hours	1½ hours	1½ to 2 hrs.	1½ - 2½ hrs.
Reading	10 minutes each day	10 minutes each day	15 minutes each day	15 minutes each day
Spelling/tables	5 minutes daily	5 minutes daily	5 minutes daily	5 minutes daily
Mathematics	Once a fortnight <i>Fridays</i>	Once a fortnight <i>Fridays</i>	30 minutes p/wk <i>Tuesdays</i>	30 minutes p/wk <i>Mondays</i>
Literacy	Once a fortnight <i>Fridays</i>	Once a fortnight <i>Fridays</i>	30 minutes p/wk <i>Tuesdays</i>	30 minutes p/wk <i>Mondays</i>
Other work	Occasional research	Topic and Mandarin	Some Art/DI/Research	As required
Where is it completed?	Mathletics online Literacy worksheet	Handout or own printout	Worksheets/books/ Mathletics online	Online/worksheets/ paper
Where does it go?	General folder	Literacy into books Maths into folder	Maths folder Homework book General folder	Verbal feedback Marked Literacy
How is it valued?	Class marked (Literacy) Online work reviewed	Verbal and occasional written feedback	Maths marked in sets Literacy used in class/pairs	Displayed. Child can choose to add work to achievement book

- ✓ All homework has one week for completion
- ✓ Spellings are shared at the end of each unit of work

If you feel that homework has been working well, I trust that this will continue in the run-up to the launch of the new homework arrangements in the Summer term.

Where the experience of homework has been inconsistent, we expect this to be rectified. As always, please use the available channels of communication to let us know how it is going.

Next ParentVoice is due to be held in the Barn on **Friday 20th March at 2:00pm** onwards

Regards,

Ross McTaggart
Headteacher