



School Lane, Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire, NN10 8NQ
Tel: 01933 352850

Headteacher: Mr. S. Dainty
email: bursar@henrychichele.northants-ecl.gov.uk
www.henrychicheleprimary.northants.sch.uk

16th March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

HEADTEACHER UPDATE

We are back and in full swing! It has been wonderful to welcome the children back to school last week; but what a busy first week it was! I apologise for not being able to write to you sooner. I have a few important updates for you.

HOMEWORK

Thank you for your participation in our homework survey. Your responses were useful as part of our review of our current approach and how we want to move forward. In summary, using the feedback from parents, staff agreed that homework should:

- Consolidate learning from the current week
- Practise basic key skills such as reading, spelling and arithmetic
- Be achievable with limited support
- Be time limited
- Create opportunities to develop life skills
- Engage children in learning and not become a burden
- Be clearly communicated so that expectations are very clear
- Be a manageable task for staff without taking too much time away from the main teaching

It was also recognised that, having recently introduced Microsoft Teams (MST) across the school and children adapting to this really well, that we should utilise this facility for the ease of turning in homework and children receiving feedback.

Taking all of this into account, we have set our expectations as follows:

Year Group	Weekly Time to Complete	Weekly Set Work	How and When Set
R	20 mins + 10 mins daily reading time	One activity linked to theme (often a practical task) <i>Handed in through Tapestry in the main</i>	Tapestry Set on a Thursday
1	30 mins + 10 mins daily reading time	Numbots practise One activity to complete (phonics, maths or theme)	Set on a Thursday through MST
2	30 mins + 10 mins daily reading time	Numbots practise Spellings One activity to complete (reading, maths, writing or theme)	Set on a Thursday through MST

Year Group	Weekly Time to Complete	Weekly Set Work	How and When Set
3	30 mins + 10 mins daily reading time	TT Rockstars practise Spellings One activity to complete (reading, maths, writing, theme or science)	Set on a Thursday through MST or CENTURY Tech
4	45 mins + 10 mins daily reading time	TT Rockstars practise Spellings One activity to complete (reading, maths, writing, theme or science)	Set on a Thursday through MST or CENTURY Tech
5	45 mins + 10 mins daily reading time	TT Rockstars practise Spellings One activity to complete (reading, maths, writing, theme or science)	Set on a Thursday through MST or CENTURY Tech
6	60 mins + 10 mins daily reading time	TT Rockstars practise Spellings Two activities to complete (reading, maths, writing, theme or science)	Set on a Thursday through MST or CENTURY Tech

As you can see, we have set our expectations so that they are progressive throughout the year groups but have stripped it back to basics – short weekly tasks to consolidate learning and prioritise the fundamental skills. The timings given are the total time we expect children to spend on homework each week and your child’s class teacher will keep this in mind when setting the tasks. If you find that your children regularly need longer to complete the tasks set, please speak to your child’s class teacher in order to discuss.

All homework will be set on MST weekly (Tapestry for Reception) although some tasks may not require MST to complete, such as tasks set on CENTURY Tech. This will ensure the expectation is always communicated consistently and there is an opportunity to submit electronically. Children have begun to use CENTURY Tech in school and will be able to use this site competently before being set home tasks.

CENTURY Tech is an online system that uses artificial intelligence to set an individualised learning pathway for each child. After completing a diagnostic assessment, the system will analyse the child’s performance and set them relevant activities to support their development. Teachers are able to interrupt this pathway of learning by setting ‘nuggets’ (modules of learning) to complete from their assessments of children in class. However, children do not need this to have happened to use the system so can do more if they wanted to, being confident that work they are completing will be set to their level. We will be increasing the use of this system in school in order to provide children with extra opportunities to consolidate learning in class.

READING BOOKS

As staff at school, we know how important the skill of reading is to the development of children in all areas. It is a skill that is needed in all aspects of life and therefore we place huge importance on it throughout our teaching.

It is because of this that we will be reintroducing the circulation of reading books this week. We want to encourage children to read as often as they can at home and at least 5 times a week. On Thursday, children will be bringing home a reading book that they need to keep for a week (or longer if it is a longer story that they want to finish). This will come back to school on the following Thursday and they will be issued with a new book. The returned books will go into isolation to be re-issued the following week. Effectively, each class will have 60 books in circulation split into two lots of 30.

We will keep this under review and adapt as necessary.

In addition to this, children will bring home two books. They will bring home a ‘learning to read’ book that they will need to practise reading to an adult and this will be very closely linked to the sounds they have learnt in school already. They will also bring home a ‘book to

share'. This will be a book to enjoy with an adult or older sibling who can read it to them and get lost in the magic of story.

COMIC RELIEF

It is Comic Relief this Friday (19th March). We are inviting the children to attend school in mufti (no red noses) for a donation to the charity. This is a suggested £1 donation but please give anything that you are able to. Donations should be brought into school and handed to your child's class teacher. Thank you.

POLLING STATION UPDATE

I am very pleased to inform you that we have been contacted by the organisers of the polling stations for the local elections to notify us that they have been able to secure the use of their preferred premises to hold the elections. Therefore, we will not need to close any parts of our school and will be **OPEN** on 6th May 2021 as normal.

HOME TESTING KITS

You may have heard in the press recently that, from 1st March 2021, if you're a member of a household, childcare bubble or support bubble of staff or a pupil you can get a twice-weekly lateral flow test:

- through your employer if they offer testing to employees
- at a local test site
- by collecting a home test kit from a test site
- by ordering a home test kit online

About 1 in 3 people with coronavirus do not have symptoms but can still pass it on to others. Regular testing of people without symptoms is important to help stop the virus spreading and protect your loved ones. As lockdown restrictions gradually ease we all need to play our part to help protect each other.

This offer of testing is for adults only and should not be used on primary age school children. The guidance also states that, should a positive result be obtained, then the whole household will need to isolate and a confirmatory PC test carried out. A negative result does not guarantee you do not have the virus and therefore does not lessen the need for face coverings, social distancing and other mitigating safety precautions.

For further details, please visit the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website.

TOWN COUNCIL AND HIGHWAYS ENGLAND COMPETITION

Just a reminder that the competition being ran by the Town Council and Highways England closes this week! Please encourage your children to take part and have their entries submitted by **Friday** 19th March.

Kind regards



Mr S. Dainty
Head Teacher