

Parent Forum 15.02.22 - Homework

Nine parents attended in person and 8 emails were received. All points raised via email were also addressed through discussion and the following summary shows the balance of comments received both via email and through the forum itself. Key points are highlighted in **bold**.

Homework at Idle CE (A) Primary

The majority of parents felt that, **previously, too much homework had been set** and this often was in the form of printed books which did not correlate with what children had been learning in class. The general view was that the amount of homework set **has now improved** and allows families time to complete other activities in the evenings and weekends as well as to focus on reading. It was raised that this suited families where parents might be working and not have time to support their children with their homework as this caused stress at home. Whilst the **majority of parents felt that homework was valuable for pupils**, some parents felt it often did not serve a purpose but increased burdens on parents, children and teachers.

An issue that was consistently raised by many parents was **communication** regarding homework. Some parents felt that the **point and purpose of the homework was not communicated well** and that there was **inconsistency in the feedback given** from different teachers.

Parents felt that **homework supporting the skills progression of the pupils would help parents to know what their children were learning, especially in grammar and maths**. Examples were shared of occasions parents had worked with their children on areas of the curriculum they were not as confident in. It was raised that **individual homework can be most effective**, although there is a workload implication for teachers in setting this. Several parents raised that, **especially for pupils with SEND, it is vital that homework set matches pupils' individual needs and is not a 'one size fits all' approach**.

It was generally felt that **there needed to be a strong routine with when homework is set and due for return** in order to support families.

It was generally felt that **homework was a good idea in KS2** to help prepare pupils for high school and make them more independent. The general opinion was that **KS2 children would need some support** doing their homework but that they would **become increasingly independent** in completing it throughout KS2. Parents felt that **KS1 pupils would benefit from just focusing on reading, handwriting and spelling** although some parents also felt there was a role for maths skills homework in KS1. There were **many positive comments about the focus on reading and the impact** this was having on children across school.

Class Dojo, SATs Companion and TT Rockstars

There was a **split of opinion about homework set on Class Dojo/screens versus on paper**. Some families have struggled to complete the work on a screen and found this frustrating. Others enjoyed being paper-free and work not being lost in children's bags. It was generally thought that a **balance would be best**, especially to give children the opportunity to do

more handwritten work. **Inconsistency of feedback on Class Dojo and inconsistent expectations of parents to access Class Dojo** was commented on as a frustration for some parents.

TT Rockstars is generally enjoyed and accessed well by pupils. Some children liked the competitive nature of it, whilst others became disillusioned over this. It was raised that the purpose of TT Rockstars **needed to be communicated to parents** (the aim being for pupils to know all their times tables by the end of Year 4).

Year 6 pupils have been trailing SATs Companion and initial views of this programme were positive so far. Children had been able to access it independently and it enabled parents to be aware of children's learning and emerging needs. The opportunity for teachers to set individualized work through this programme was explained. **Some parents had liked the use of CGP books** in the past, as it provided structure and they could mark the work together however other parents had found that these were not always relevant to the learning from that week.

What has inspired me?

The **"What has inspired me?" homework also split opinion.** Some parents were extremely positive about it and felt that it allowed their children to be creative and follow their own interests. They enjoyed the amount of time given and that it suited children of all abilities. Others found that their children did not want to engage with it and struggled with the long-time scale. They felt that if the **"What has inspired me?" homework was encouraged, rather than mandatory**, and potentially once-a-term rather than half-termly, that this would take pressure off families. There were also comments regarding the fact it was important homework completed was child-led rather than being completed by parents. Several parents commented there was **a need for pupils' efforts to be recognised** for completing open-ended projects but without a competitive element which could have a negative effect on motivation.

Areas to explore further at a later date:

- Spellings and spelling tests – several parents made comments via email regarding spellings but there was not time to discuss this within the forum.
- Christian Values homework – a few email comments were received regarding Christian Values homework but there was not time to discuss this within the forum.

Next steps:

Teaching staff and governors have had these notes circulated. We will be discussing parental feedback with a view to adapting the homework policy and procedures for Summer Term 2022. We will keep you informed of any changes made and the rationale behind these.

Many thanks to all the parents and carers who have provided their views on homework to us. If you would like to add any further thoughts on this subject, please contact the office via email with the subject heading *parent forum – homework*. We look forward to your thoughts on the topic of behaviour at our next parent forum on Thursday, April 7th 2022.