

Sky Class

Ideas for parents supporting GEP pupils

1st October 2009

Dear Parents / Carers,

In Sky Class your child, in addition to receiving Literacy and Numeracy lessons on a daily basis, is also benefitting from a small group focus on concepts that they are a little 'wobbly' in. Your child is receiving support at this time, to aid both confidence and skills in Literacy and Numeracy. It is not anticipated that all children will need to receive this assistance all year. However, we feel that if we have an opportunity to offer this extra helping hand, then it should be done as soon as possible and with parental support as well.

Please find included on this letter some useful websites and ideas to help you support your child's reading, writing, spelling and numeracy at home. It is very important that any additional help is kept upbeat at home, so that your child does not feel that this extra 'work' is either more 'homework' or a punishment.

Handwriting

As you are know from my previous letter, Sky Class are focussing on improving their handwriting this term and are being gradually introduced to a cursive style. To this end, please ensure that your child is trying to form their letters correctly, that they are orientated the same way at home as they are in school (correctly!) and that they make an attempt to make their letters a clear even size. You might like to work through this booklet with your child, to practice letters that we have looked at in class, and letters that we shall come across shortly. Please also encourage your child to think about their letter formation when attempting other homework. To this end, I have enclosed a copy of the cursive style that we are aiming for, along with a blank handwriting sheet for your own use at home with your child.

Reading

First of all, thank you for supporting your child with nightly reading and recording. When reading, please ensure that your child segments unfamiliar words (breaks them down into recognisable sounds and phonemes) and then blends them together to attempt the challenging word. Saying it for them will not result in them picking the word up into their sight vocabulary, whereas practising this useful strategy for future reading, will! Post reading, please encourage dialogue with your child, to ensure comprehension of vocabulary and plot line (when fiction) or factual content (when nonfiction). A child finishing a first reading of a book is not necessarily ready to go

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onto the next in a scheme. We need to check their comprehension, through questioning as well as their understanding of the structure etc. However, this should not become 20 questions! Your modelling of your enjoyment of reading is far more powerful, so sharing stories, picture books, audio books etc is a real encouragement for a lifelong skill. In addition, with free reading at home, do not allow them to get stuck in an author rut! However tempting it is to allow them to just continue reading someone they enjoy, introduce a range of writing styles. This will impact not only on their reading, but their writing too, as they come to recognise the features of different genres. So, if cooking on a Saturday, talk about the cookery book instructions in terms of content, layout and presentation and the reasons for this. To aid with reading skills, I have enclosed a reading strategy sheet that may help.

Spelling and Phonics

Please ensure that your child is completing their LSCWC homework properly. This sounds obvious, but a child will attempt to short cut this for a quick finish by copying the last column they attempted and therefore learning a 'misspelling'. They need to be supported to 'look' at the word, 'say' the word aloud, 'cover' the word up, attempt a 'write' of the word, before finally 'checking' that the word has been successfully written. This takes up to 10 minutes a night, but when done correctly pays dividends. As part of the spellings, your child is receiving a few 'High Frequency' words that they should know by sight reading asap. Please ensure that these are focussed upon closely. I have also enclosed a range of strategies to help make learning spellings a little more fun. In addition, there is also the templates for flash cards of the 'High Frequency' words that your child should be secure in between Reception and Year 2.

Numeracy

Your child has shown either a wobble in their start to Year 2 Numeracy, or a lack in confidence. To support your child's enjoyment of learning, in addition to the GEP intervention during school hours, please could you involve your child at home in thinking about the following numeracy topics:

Number bonds to 10

Number bonds to 20

Recall and sight recognition of the 'teen numbers' and where they are in relation to each other on a number line.

Place value of Tens and Units eg. Recognising that the 3 in 36 is 30 or 3 lots of ten, so that 36 is the same as 3 lots of ten and 6 units.

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We also need to see an improvement in the 'mental maths' recall of addition and subtraction up to 10 and 20. Regular fun quizzes would be of great help. We talk in school about 'holding a number' and then counting on or back from it. Perhaps involve your child in simple numeracy when shopping to encourage them to see the value of addition skills as an everyday life skill that you use at home.

Websites:

<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/> Fantastic school based site with resources for all manner of subjects

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents/> (General information for parents)

http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/websites/4_11/site/numeracy.shtml (numeracy activities for KS1)

http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/websites/4_11/site/literacy.shtml (literacy activities for KS1)

<http://www.crickweb.co.uk/Key-Stage-1.html> (all subjects for KS1)

<http://www.amblesideprimary.com/ambleweb/index.htm> (A massive website with limitless resources that are visual, interactive and not dull!)

Please let us know of any successes or challenges that you come across when supporting your child. Thank you for your continued support. If you come across any other fantastic sites, please do let us know and we will inform other parents.

Yours sincerely,

Miss V. Cooper

Sky class teacher.