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Dear Parents and Carers,

Changes to Home Learning from October Half Term

At Brookside Academy, we regularly review our curriculum and home learning offer to ensure that everything we provide has the greatest possible impact on children's learning and development. Following a review of current educational research and our own practices in school, we will be making some changes to our home learning offer from October half term. These changes reflect our commitment to using evidence-informed approaches and championing what we believe is best for our children.

Spelling

Children in Years 1-6 will continue to use Emile to practise and revisit the spelling rule currently being taught in school.

We will no longer be sending home weekly lists of ten spelling words. While children may learn specific words as part of their practice, our aim is for them to understand and apply spelling rules across a wide range of vocabulary. We believe that focusing on memorising a list of words can place emphasis on the wrong aspect of learning spelling.

As a result, there will no longer be a weekly spelling test. Instead, spelling will continue to be assessed through children's everyday writing and their ability to apply spelling patterns and rules independently across the curriculum, as well as our summative assessment points.

Mathematics

We will no longer set maths home learning tasks in any year group.

Instead, we strongly encourage children in Years 2-6 to spend some time each day using Times Tables Rock Stars. Short, regular practice is far more effective than occasional longer sessions and helps children develop fluency, confidence and automatic recall of multiplication facts.

Reading

Early Year Foundation Stage

Children will continue to be sent home with weekly reading words which revisit the sounds they have been taught at school during phonics.

Early Year Foundation Stage & Key Stage 1

Children will continue to receive a reading record, and we encourage families to support children by reading at home at least three times per week. Regular reading at home remains one of the most valuable ways parents can support their child's learning.

Key Stage 2

Reading record will be phased out in Year 3 and children will no longer receive set reading homework. Instead, we will champion the use of our new reading platform, Bedrock Learning.

Bedrock Learning is developing to be closely linked to our curriculum and will help children develop their vocabulary, comprehension and background knowledge through topics that connect directly to what they are learning in school. This means children will build the knowledge and language needed to be successful across the curriculum, and in later life.

This does not mean that we do not value children reading physical books. Quite the opposite. We continue to encourage all children to read for pleasure at home whenever possible. However, we believe that regular engagement with Bedrock Learning will have the greatest impact on children's educational outcomes by complementing and strengthening the learning taking place in school.

The continued use of Reading Journals in KS2 will be reviewed at the end of the academic year as we evaluate the impact of these changes.

Working Together

We appreciate your ongoing support in helping your child develop positive learning habits at home. By focusing on a smaller number of high-impact activities that are closely aligned to classroom learning, we believe these changes will provide the best possible support for children's progress and achievement.

If you have any questions about these changes, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours sincerely,

Brookside Academy