



### **Colby School Homework Policy**

At Colby School, we encourage children to develop a love of learning and to follow our ethos of "Everyone Learns, Everyone Leads and Everyone Matters." We do this by providing children with stimulating and fun learning experiences at school, which we hope will inspire them to continue learning at home. We believe family life plays a vital part in a child's education and that having fun with your family should be valued, appreciated and cherished. This was proven absolutely true during lock-down, when Colby families thrived together, despite the unusual circumstances! Thank you for all your support with your children's learning at home.

We have no formal homework - we encourage children to want to learn outside school and provide them with lots of ideas for how they can do this. We have an expectation that children will read at home and provide children and families with guidance about this, as detailed below:

#### **Why you should read with your child every day**

We want to encourage and foster a love of reading in the children at our school. As parents, we know that you want the very best for your children and already appreciate that learning to read is key to accessing the curriculum at school and the wider world. However, with increasingly busy lives it may seem that hearing a child read at the end of a tiring day can feel like just another chore. We hope that by writing this article for the newsletter we can remind everyone of the importance of reading with children, not just as a mechanical process but as an enjoyable activity for you to share with your children. You reading to your child is equally as important as them listening to you.

Here are some reasons why you should read with your child every day:

1. Reading is fun! Sharing a story, or a non-fiction book, whether it is read by an adult or by a child can give you the opportunity to share funny moments, or wonder at the world and beyond.
2. The value of a bedtime story cannot be over-estimated. It can be a quiet, settling time and gives your child the opportunity to listen to story language and allow their imagination to paint pictures.
3. Children absorb language structure and extend their vocabulary.
4. Children are able to think more logically and express their own thoughts and ideas more clearly.
5. Attention and concentration span is improved which has an impact on all learning.

It is really useful to spend a few moments discussing a book with your child. You can find out how much they have enjoyed it, how well they understood it and whether they have any questions about it.

Some useful questions to ask your child about the book they have shared - choose just one or two to discuss.

1. Who are the main characters?
2. What do you think will happen next?
3. How do you think that character feels? Why? How would you feel in that situation?
4. Can you predict how the book will end?

5. Who is your favourite character? Why?
6. Is there a hidden message in the story? What is it?
7. Can you tell the story in your own words?
8. Do you like how it ended? Can you think of another way the book could have ended?

Remember that reading doesn't just have to be 'done' through books. Comics and magazines are equally good at encouraging children's interest. Point out signposts and information as you are out and about. Children like to be like you, so let them see you reading newspapers, magazines, as well as books.

We hold regular reading competitions and events to encourage children to find an author to suit them or to try something new. Children play a major role in choosing books for the school library.

**Every class teacher provides children with ideas for optional homework.**

**The suggestions below might also be suitable for your child to complete if they are absent from school because of illness but feel okay to do a little work:**

#### **Amber Class**

Reception children are given Jolly Phonic Worksheets to complete at home and are expected to read every day.

Year 1 children are expected to read every day and complete weekly spellings which can be accessed on Spelling Shed using their online login details. Year 1's also have access to LEXIA. LEXIA is a great programme which addresses the development of oral language, reading, spelling and writing skills in a really fun and interactive way.

Individual homework may be given which will focus on personal targets such as handwriting.

#### **Sapphire Class**

Sapphire children are expected to read every day and practise their weekly spellings, which can be found on Google Classroom in the 'Spellings' folder. Children can also practise their spellings on the Spelling Shed / Ed Shed website where the new spellings are posted on Fridays.

Children are encouraged to practise basic maths skills such as number bonds and times tables using online games - the 'Hit the Button' game is particularly good for this. Google Classroom also has a folder 'Maths Songs' which contains songs that children can sing to learn counting skills and times tables.

Children with LEXIA accounts are encouraged to use this site for 30 minutes twice a week.

Individual homework may be given to some children focusing on personal targets such as handwriting or phonics.

#### **Emerald Class**

Children are expected to read at least 3x per week. This should be for roughly 20mins out loud to an adult or older sibling. It is great if they would like to read more than this though! Try to encourage children to read independently if they can for slightly longer periods to help build up their reading stamina.

Children are encouraged to do 'hit the button' at home. This is an excellent times tables website. Any tables practise for 15 mins 3x per week is good though!

Children are given optional one off homework projects. For example, covering a parent in sticky notes to label their bones and muscles or growing cress in an egg shell at home. I will often ask the children to finish work at home if they want extra credit or if they have not completed work that has been set at school.

It would be great if children could practise their spellings at home. We are using a program called Spelling Shed which all the children are now familiar with. The children need to learn all their common exception words for year 1 and 2 and those lists are on the website for them to practise. I will also send paper copies out for you as well.

Children are encouraged to bring in any work they do at home and can earn Headteacher Awards or Magic Suitcase prizes.

### **Ruby Class**

Children are expected to:

Read daily.

Practise spellings for a test each week.

Practise time tables and telling the time.

Children also have access to IXL and Sumdog for optional mathematics and to LEXIA and Spelling Shed for optional reading and spelling work.

### **Amethyst Class**

From this week, Year 6 children are all invited to a weekly After School Mathematics' Club designed to develop number skills and confidence.

Next term, Year 6 children will all be invited to a weekly After School Writing Club.

Year 6 will have homework set from a maths website called IXL and spelling lists on the Spelling Shed website.

All children are expected to read regularly.

All children are expected to organise and plan a presentation for delivery to the class once a year.

All children are asked to complete tasks relating to their leadership area as required in their own time. These cover a very wide range of activities like writing letters, organising others or researching a specific topic.