



**DATE: November 17<sup>th</sup> 2015**

**SUBJECT: Home Learning –“Anything that children do outside the normal school day that contributes to their learning in response to guidance from the school. Home learning encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents to support children’s learning.”**

The first Parent Forum of the school year was very well attended with most classes represented. In a change to the regular format Ms Margetts gave opened the meeting with a presentation about Home Learning in general and why the school considers it important:

- Research shows that Home Learning has little or no impact on achievement.
- Provides an important opportunity for Parents to engage with their child’s learning.
- Helps children develop skills of independent time management
- Displays what children are able to produce under unaided conditions
- Deepens classroom learning

Historically, Home Learning at Raglan has been inconsistent and not focussed on supporting the curriculum. The school is working to improve consistency across all years to make Home Learning more closely integrated and extend activities in the classroom. This is still a work in progress.

Parents indicated a positive change in the offer of choice which has been implemented in most year groups. Having the opportunity to plan which Home Learning activity their child would undertake each week from a list allowed for Parents to be more prepared and schedule time in busy schedules.

Parents asked if there could be more consistency in when homework was set. Ideally could homework be set earlier in the week so parents have an opportunity to ask questions before the weekend. Spellings particularly in Year 6 are not set early enough for children to learn them in some cases only 2 days. Ms Margetts replied that spelling as a whole was being looked at throughout the school.

There was discussion around reading at Raglan and some confusion amongst parents about the reading program. This is once again an area that is under review and parents will be offered more information about reading development and the reading program in general. A meeting for volunteer readers is scheduled.

Communication about learning and methods taught at Raglan was discussed and parents were directed to the school web site where many video tutorials available with the children explaining mathematics and phonics examples. It was agreed that this resource should be publicised more.

A question was asked as to why Home Learning seems to be predominantly literacy based rather than maths. Ms Margetts replied that at least for the moment this was to simplify the Home Learning in that it can be confusing for students if their parent teaches them a method of

mathematics that differs to that taught in the classroom. It was easier to be consistent with literacy learning.

A parent raised a concern that Y1 spellings had not been received. Ms Margetts indicated that they would receive spellings but that it was held back for review.

Parents indicated that they would like more communication about Home Learning and how this is linked to the learning in the classroom. It was discussed that curriculum letters should be received at the start of every term and are available on the web site. The school will continue to look at other opportunities to involve parents in their child's learning.

It was asked if possible could teachers provide a list of extra resources that might be used at home to support the learning in the classroom. Some teachers do suggest books for students etc. Once again the web site was discussed as a source of additional material and the school will continue to look at additional resources that might be of benefit.

Is set Home Learning mandatory? The school cannot force parents or children to take part in Home Learning. However, participation is strongly encouraged as it provides excellent opportunities for parents to engage and assess the learning of their child.

Some parents requested more information regarding Year 1 phonics in particular "High Frequency Words". Phonics at Raglan is being revamped by the phonics co-ordinator and more information should be available shortly regarding phonics testing and phonics in general. Phonics information is also available on the web site.

A question was raised regarding term time holidays and if children are permitted to be absent from school if it is for educational benefit. Ms Margetts replied that at present it is not within the remit of the Headteacher to give approved absence. This is a change that was made by the Government and enforced by the Borough. This is currently under review nationally.

A general discussion then took place about other feedback that parents would like to give.

It was suggested that the book swap that was held last year could be good to continue. This was organised by a parent and should parents wish to organise this once more the school would be happy to facilitate.

Some Parents asked about outdoor learning and Forest Schools. Ms Margetts indicated that a member of staff has just finished her Forest School training and that the school would be looking to develop the space we have available to support outdoor learning.

Some Parents felt that the recent Parent Governor Election could have been better promoted with more opportunity to interact with candidates. Some suggestions included videos from each candidate etc. This will be fed back to the Governing Body for consideration.

It was acknowledged that there were still some issues with the lining up procedure in the Infants playground. This is still a work in progress and changes will continue to be made to refine the process.

**Thank you to all of the Parent Reps who attended this meeting and their extremely valuable contributions. The next Parent Forum which will be open to all parents will be in the spring term and the date and topic will be made**

available shortly. Parents who are unable to attend are welcome to continue contribute through their class rep.