



Ashmead
Primary School



<http://ashmeadprimary.wordpress.com/>

13th Sept 2013

Dates for the diary

16th Sept: Reception 'Meet the Teacher' meeting: 9.10 a.m.

17th Sept: Y6 Meet the teacher and Secondary Transfer meeting: 6pm

7th - 11th Oct: Maths Week

28th Oct - 1st Nov: Half Term

25th - 29th Nov: Science Week

20th Dec - 3rd Jan:
Christmas Holiday

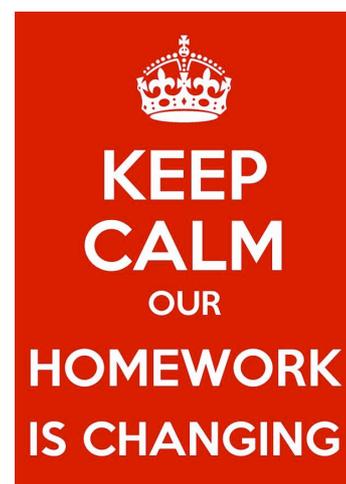
6th Jan: INSET Day (school closed to children)

More dates to follow NEXT WEEK

Welcome back!

This fortnight's newsletter is focused on the recent changes to our home learning (homework) policy.

We are trialling a new approach to home learning this year as many of you will have heard in this week's meet-the-teacher meetings. There will be a weekly focus on reading and maths skills development with half-termly topic work as well.



Reading

Ideally, all children should read at home every day. This should be a pleasurable, shared activity - children who feel pressured do not progress well in their reading.

Children at the very earliest stages of learning to read will not be able to read independently but should be read to every day. Parents know what an enriching experience it is to read to children - but we all also know how hard it can be to find the time for this, particularly as children become more independent in their reading. Please try to read to your children no matter how old they are - Year Sixes can enjoy this just as much as those in the Nursery!

If your child is able to access a number of books at home they are much more likely to pick up reading skills. Owning the books are ideal but if this is difficult Lewisham's libraries allow you to borrow 12 books at a time.

Children's reading is so important. If they have a positive view of reading they are much more likely to become skillful readers. Being a good reader allows children to access so much more of the rest of the curriculum (even maths as some of you may have seen on the news yesterday <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-24046971>).

There is a particularly strong connection between reading and writing. Children who are keen readers are much more likely to pick up writing skills quickly as through their reading they become attuned to grammatical patterns and to how authors achieve particular effects. When authors (children's or otherwise) are asked how you become a writer the most frequent advice they give is to read, read, read!

We will be running more workshops later this year to help parents with the practicalities of reading at home with their children.



Maths

Maths passports. These are aimed at helping children develop their mental maths skills. They should be practiced at home as frequently as possible. Short bursts of less than five minutes are ideal. Children who have a bank of number facts that they just 'know' are at a huge advantage. We try to get children to make as many connections as possible so that one fact helps give you another. For example, if you know your number bonds to 10 (i.e. 1+ 9, 2+ 8 and so on) securely it is straightforward to work out number bonds to 100 ($1+9 = 10$ so $10+90 = 100$).



My Maths We are also launching this year the use of the My Maths website for children from Y2 to Y6 initially (children in Y1 will use the site as they become ready for it).

This site will allow your child to log in and complete activities set by the teacher. In addition to this your child will have free access to as many other activities as they wish. One of the big advantages of the site is that there are 'online lessons' which go through the required learning quite methodically. This will hopefully help parents in supporting their children in their maths learning.

Teachers will be showing the children how to access the site in the next week or so and after this you will receive a letter with your child's log-in details. If you would like to explore some of the online lessons immediately you can do this via the main log-in which is:

Username: ashmead
Password: add

You will be prompted with the question, "What level are you working at?" and having chosen a level you can then choose a different area of maths and look at one of the online lessons there. To give a very rough guide, most children in Year 2 will be working at Level 1/2. Most children in Years 3 - 4 will be working at Level 3 and most children in Years 5 - 6 will be working between Level 3 and Level 5.

We will also be running parent workshops on maths and this will include a session on using the My Maths website.

Topic learning

Children will be asked to complete a topic project every half term, due into school after the holidays. This may have a practical element (e.g. model-making) but it will certainly involve writing. One effective way of organising this would be to set some time aside each week rather than doing the whole project in the break.



The full home learning policy is available for reading on the school website (<http://ashmeadprimary.wordpress.com/aboutashmea/policies/>) It is reviewed annually.