



# HILLSGROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

SINCE 1950

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- 1. There are lots of concerns regarding clarity around the homework being set from parents in Bronte class. Parents feel pressure to complete every piece set and that doesn't appear to be the criteria. Parents and children feel under pressure from the sheer volume of work on the homework menu. It had also been mentioned that once handed in unless children are given special recognition for what they have done it goes un - noticed therefore giving children no incentive to complete it. Homework is supposed to supplement and support learning in class not be a competition of who can produce the best! Nor should it be putting pressure on busy family lives.**

The main aims of homework menus continue to be:

- *Give children an opportunity to explore learning in an unstructured setting, encouraging them to be independent and follow their own lines of enquiry*
- *Create a partnership between school and family, giving parents an insight into what their child is learning (04/09/19)*

*Children are encouraged to think creatively, create their own lines of enquiry and most of all enjoy taking time to create projects.*

*The homework is a MENU - not a tick list of everything to do.*

*The word options will be added and begin with 'You could...'*

*Incentive to complete homework is that learning is happening at home/beyond the classroom.*

*We will continue to celebrate a range of children, not as a competition.*

*Letter to be sent out to parents explaining this.*

*The single most important thing is that children are reading every day!*

- 2. Another minor issue raised is the lack of information regarding the year 4 residential to Carrotty wood.**

*Closing date for final numbers was 31/01/2020. Letter went out next school day 03/02/2020.*

- 3. I would be keen to discuss the homework menus if possible. I genuinely love the concept and it has real benefits and sparks some spontaneous nice things to do and also nice conversations and creativity. Project work is great and can instil some great qualities. However I do think there is genuinely a lot there on top of other work and extracurricular activities etc. It can create some stress and tension and doesn't always make it an enjoyable experience. It's can also be demotivating for them when it's handed in and enjoyed for that day and then sent home by the end of the week.**

*See above responses. Also, extra-curricular activities are by choice.*

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- 4. Can I ask for an update on how the music sessions are going please and how regularly these are happening? Lewis was buzzing after the Living on a Prayer session. When will the next one be?**

*Lesson happen on year group number week – every half-term. Each week, different year groups have a music day which enables children to develop their skills over a day without returning to lessons over week. The Music Snapshot shows that pupils are much more able to talk about music is topic related words, and are enjoying more engaging music learning.*

- 5. How are the homework menus working from the school's point of view? Personally we like them, they prompt a lot of family discussion and ideas, though getting Edward to put pen to paper is challenging on top of the times tables and spellings practise (but that's a personal issue for us to deal with not a complaint!)**

*School continuing to develop idea and respond to feedback.*

- 6. It was discussed previously that homework should not be sent back home on the same day/week it is handed in as it was demoralising for the children who had worked hard to complete. This again is what happened Autumn term 2, maths homework came back on the same day. This is gutting for the children and they are noticing that unless their piece is chosen for an award it is barely even seen or recognised by class teacher.**

*A responsive letter has been sent out to all parents to explain.*

- 7. Queries regarding lunch times. Lunch time seems to be very regimented. Children are made to line up in register order everyday. This means the same children are last in the queue to get their lunch everyday through no fault of their own. Is this fair? These children are made to wait the longest and lose more of their lunch break, which therefore could mean that they are rushing to get back out with friends. As well as lining up in register order children are made to sit in register order on lunch tables. The children are not able to sit with friends. This is concerning as this is the children's time and should be an enjoyable eating experience for them. What changes can be made?**

*I have been up at the lunch hall personally over the past 2 days to see how we could respond to the concern. After meeting with MDS and staff, it is clear that there are a few reasons as to why we currently run the canteen the way we do:*

- 1. Due to staggered lunch times REC to year 4 have to be moved through canteen in 1 hour. That is 10 classes through from 1130 – 1230.*
- 2. Register order is used to make sure no one misses their lunch.*
- 3. It is a fast and reliable system for the younger pupils.*
- 4. Year 5/6 have an hour slot to themselves – that is only 4 classes in an hour.*
- 5. Year 5/6 pupils have more responsibility and independence in the canteen. They arrive in groups (not in classes or registered order) and sit wherever they like, with whoever they choose to. This way the older children are given more freedom.*



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- 8. Fruit and Milk are given out at break time. The children are made to stand and have fruit and/or milk at the side of playground. Children are choosing not to eat their fruit or have the milk (paid for by parents) as it eats into their time playing with friends at first break. Again this should be the children's time to enjoy with friends. We are asking the children to chose between fruit or play? Can this be given out at another time in the day as children should not be made to miss one or the other**

*KS1 children are asked to eat their fruit and drink their milk at playtimes as this then doesn't take away from their learning time. EYFS continue to have theirs as a social time together in their classroom. KS1 pupils are asked to not run around during play while eating and drinking for their own safety. KS2 pupils have their milk and fruit at play also in order to reduce impact on learning. They are encouraged to drink their milk in one place for their own safety.*

- 9. Numerous complaints from children about the standard of school lunches, that they are not good or at least as good as they used to be. Children are coming home saying they're 'awful' 'cold' 'chicken is dry and hard' and 'potatoes are burnt'. Many parents have said they have been forced to change their kids to pack lunches as the hot meal is not of good quality. Please can we look into this ASAP.**

*The Pabulum catering service is audited regularly and have passed their food service and hygiene qualifications successfully. They are always open to feedback from parents and their link can be found on their website.*

## **Positives:**

*'Thank you for all you do for all the children, the school seems a really positive place to be again!'*

*'...what a great school you are creating you and the team should be proud of your efforts.'*

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