



St Nicolas and St Mary Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

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Dear Parents and Carers

IT'S GOOD TO TALK

As a school, we have been trialling new ways to introduce rich vocabulary into the children's learning, whether it be subject specific, or more general, to improve their communication and writing skills. We are also working hard to develop oracy skills, through paired, group and whole class discussions in everything we teach.

We would love to involve parents, carers and wider family members in this process and have decided to introduce a monthly Talk Homework to get families discussing different topics together which will hopefully be both interesting and fun! Sometimes the Talk Homework will be the same for the whole school community and at other times it may be linked to specific class topics or interests.

Why is Talk Homework useful?

- Children who complete their Talk Homework regularly are likely to feel more confident in contributing ideas in lessons and when completing writing activities in school.
- Talk Homework offers the opportunity for children to think through and discuss initial ideas in order to develop the thought process
- Talk homework helps to improve children's vocabulary which in turn improves their communication skills and develops their vocabulary.
- Talk homework helps to develop respectful speaking and listening skills and children to value other people's opinions as well as their own.

Helpful hints on conducting a successful Talk Homework session

- This is not a piece of homework your children can do alone! It can involve different family members or friends in one big discussion or individual conversations during the week.
- Encourage as many interactions as possible – for example asking grandparents to join in on a further discussion later in the week.
- Find times which work for the family, eg at dinner times or during car journeys, or a walk somewhere.
- Ask your child for their opinions and encourage them to expand on their ideas eg Why do you feel this way? Why is this important to you?
- Explain your own opinion and how it is fine to have different views or opinions.
- Develop your child's vocabulary through the use of "ambitious" vocabulary when you talk. If you do this, however, always make sure your child has understood what you are saying, clarifying meaning where necessary.
- Try and make it an enjoyable activity
- Switch off the television to try to ensure that this is dedicated talking and listening time
- Model thoughtful conversation... "I think that... because... which makes me feel... What is your opinion on this?"
- Try out the ABC approach – Do you 'agree'? Can you 'build' upon what another person has said? Will you 'challenge' what has been said?

We have introduced this concept to the children this week, during a special assembly, where we modelled a conversation on our first Talk Homework, which is all about reading!

THIS MONTH'S TALK HOMEWORK

PLEASE DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING:

What do you most enjoy reading and why? You might like to think about favourite authors or books from childhood or the different genres that you read whether it is stories, magazines, poems or recipes. Which books have you not been able to put down and why?

We would love to hear how the Talk Homework has been going and so please fill out the slip below, with any comments or discussion points, and sign to say that the homework has been completed. We will then also be able to reward children who have taken part in school with dojos (EY/KS1) and best points (KS2). All returned entries will also be put into a monthly prize draw!

Many thanks for your support in this exciting new venture.

Best wishes

Dr Victoria Bishop
Assistant Headteacher

Johnny DeWaal
English Leader

'It's Good To Talk'

We hope you enjoyed discussing your favourite books at home!

Please write down any comments about your conversations below as we would love to hear about them! Please send them back into class when completed.

Name of child..... Class.....

Signed by Parent/Carer.....

Journey together ★ Guided by God ★ To do the best we can