



**Whittingham**  
C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

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*Ohand in hand together we will become resilient, respectful and responsible citizens of our community and the wider world*

### **Homework Forum Feedback - Maths**

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2022

Dear Parents/ Carers,

You may remember that a recent section in the Headteacher's Blog mentioned that we hoped to set up a homework forum following some questionnaire responses which raised this as an issue.

Unfortunately, due to the continued cases of COVID 19 in school we have yet to meet face to face. We are also mindful that as February half term approaches, we are at the halfway point in the year and if we are to make any changes, we need to make them sooner rather than later for the best possible impact on the children's learning. Therefore, the purpose of this letter is to give you some information about the area that seemed to cause the most concern, namely online homework for maths.

After subscribing to Maths Flex and School Jam as the sources of the school's maths homework in February 2021, it appears that parents do not feel that these programmes are effective for children's progress.

Similarly, we have seen:

- Low engagement in the online maths work across school, despite staff promoting both Maths Flex and School Jam.
- Many errors with the programming/ answer boxes have been experienced when using Maths Flex.
- Children are not practicing written methods so the impact of some of the questions set is limited.
- Internet/ device access can't always be guaranteed for children to engage with Maths Flex or School Jam.
- Both parent/ carer views and pupil views were not in favour of Maths Flex in particular due to answers not being in written method form where the children practice their taught methods from school and children were despondent, focusing on using a device and not necessarily the maths.

After the initial pupil and parent questionnaires, a trial of paper-based homework sheets was started within Class 3 during the latter stages of Autumn 2 and the beginning of Spring 1 half-term. From this, children and parents/ carers were far happier and found it "more straight forward". A far higher proportion of children were seen to complete and submit their homework than when it was via Maths Flex (36%-57% of the class with Maths Flex; 92%-100% with paper-based maths homework).

#### **Alternative for moving forward**

After researching many sources for primary maths resources, CGP is the most suitable and consistent in terms of quality, appropriate pitch, quantity and potential impact for children in Years 1-Year 6. (Children in Reception would continue to be able to access School Jam and alternative activities set on Tapestry as is appropriate).

Many children and parents preferred Sumdog maths as an online aid to supplement paper-based work rather than be the main focus of homework so we would look to continue to have this in place.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who took time to complete the questionnaire or raised this issue at Parents Evening and we trust you will be pleased with the changes that will be in place from after February half term holiday.

Best wishes,

Neil Charlton – Deputy Headteacher and Maths Lead.

Belinda Athey – Headteacher.

