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“Live to Learn: Learn to Live”

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Dear Parents and Carers,

The 144 Club

The national programme of study for mathematics states that children should be fluent in their multiplication tables up to 12 x 12 by the end of Year 4.

Knowing times tables off by heart and being able to recall any multiplication fact immediately is a skill that children will use for the rest of their lives. There are many word problems and written calculations in maths tests that require children to use their knowledge of multiplication facts. We are finding that children are taking too long to answer these questions and therefore are often unable to complete maths tests in the given time because they don't have immediate recall of their times tables.

We have therefore decided to introduce a new initiative at Bickley for children in Yrs 4, 5 and 6 called 'The 144 Club.'

All children in Yrs 4, 5 and 6 will be given a card which has all the multiplication facts from 1 – 144 in the 12 different multiplication tables. Each times table has 3 small boxes beneath it. When a child feels confident that they know all the multiplication facts in a particular times table, they will be able to ask a member of staff to test them on the times table. This will be by the adult asking them facts from the table, in a random order. If the child can answer the facts immediately, the adult will acknowledge that they know the times table, and will put a small sticker in one of the boxes. Children can ask class teachers, TAs, lunch supervisors – any member of staff. Once they have filled their card with stickers, they will be a member of the 144 club, and will be given a badge in assembly.

We would love parents to help support their children to learn their tables. The best way to do this is to focus on one times table at a time, find out the facts they already know (eg – in the 6x table, they probably already know 1x6, 2x6, 5x6, 10x6 and 11x6) and just focus on the facts they don't know. Focus on about 3 facts per day and keep firing questions at them. Have them written on a sheet of paper in a place that they will regularly see them (eg by their bed) and write questions for them to answer on the 3 facts all jumbled up. In the end, by going over and over a small number of facts at a time, the facts will sink in.

Class teachers are focusing on learning multiplication tables, but the children in their classes are all at very different points in terms of learning all the facts. It is therefore incredibly helpful if parents can support us with this by focusing on the particular facts their children are struggling with.

Many thanks for your support.

Yours sincerely

E. Blake