



Policy on Home Learning

1 Introduction

1.1 Home Learning is anything children do outside the normal school day that contributes to their learning, in response to guidance from the school. Home learning encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents to support the children's learning. For example, parents who spend time reading stories to their children before bedtime are helping with home learning.

2 Rationale for homework

2.1 Home learning is a very important part of a child's education, and can add much to a child's development. The government made clear its commitment to homework in the 1997 White Paper 'Excellence in Schools', in which homework was described as 'an essential part of good education'. We recognise that the educational experience that any school by itself can provide is limited by the time and resources available; children can therefore benefit greatly from the complementary learning that they do at home. Indeed, we see home learning as an important example of cooperation between teachers and parents. One of the aims of our teaching is for children to develop as independent learners, and we believe that doing home learning is one of the main ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning.

2.2 Home learning plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. However, we also acknowledge the important role of play and free time in a child's growth and development. While home learning is important, it should not prevent children from taking part in the activities of various out-of-school clubs and of other organisations that play an important part in the lives of our pupils. We are well aware that children spend more time at home than at school, and we believe that they develop their interests and skills to the full only when parents encourage them to make maximum use of the opportunities available outside school.

3 Aims and objectives

3.1 The aims and objectives of home learning are:

- to enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development;
- to help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner;
- to promote cooperation between home and school in supporting each child's learning;
- to enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered in sufficient depth;
- to provide educational experiences not possible in school;
- to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school, and to allow children to practice skills taught in lessons;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future.

4 Types of home learning

- 4.1 Staff and pupils regard home learning as an integral part of the curriculum - it is planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of learning.
- 4.2 We set a variety of homework activities:
- 4.3 In the **Foundation Stage** homework activities include:
- 4.4 FS1: Story bags, Pupils Achievement Files, reading books.
- 4.5 FS2: Reading books (weekly), words to learn in the first 2 terms (High frequency, tricky (red) words), RWInc sounds and occasional maths activities as the need arises. Maths activities are initially modelled on a photocopied sheet. Children entering Reception benefit from a home visit from staff and are given a home learning stationery pack. Parents are also invited to a meeting to explain RWInc phonics.
- 4.6 **Key Stage 1**, we give children books to take home and read with their parents each week. Guidance is given to parents on achieving the maximum benefit from this time spent reading with their child. We also ask Key Stage 1 children to learn spellings linked to RWInc phonics as part of their home learning. Sometimes, we ask children to talk about a topic at home prior to studying it in school. For example, in the history topic on toys, we ask children to find out what toys were popular when their grandparents were young, and, if possible, to bring examples into school to show the other children. Sometimes, we ask children to find and collect things that we then use in science lessons, and occasionally we ask children to take home learning that they have started in school, when we believe that they could benefit from spending further time on it. When we ask children to study a topic, or to research a particular subject, we encourage them to use not only the school library but also the local library, as well as the Internet.
- 4.3 **At Key Stage 2**, we continue to give children the sort of home learning activities outlined in paragraph 4.2, but we expect them to do more tasks independently. Activities include topic related home learning and maths or literacy activities given with the expectation that children will consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school through practice at home. Maths and Literacy tasks ensure that prior learning has been understood.
- 4.4 Home learning is marked according to the general school marking policy. Home learning completed well is acknowledged and praised. There may be issues arising from the learning, which the teacher will follow up in lesson time.
- 4.5 We recognise that children have individual learning styles, which means that some tasks can be completed in a number of different ways, while others demand a particular approach.

5 Amount of home learning

- 5.1 As they move through the school, we increase the amount of home learning that we give the children. We expect children in Key Stage 1 to spend approximately one hour a week doing home learning, although this may well include reading with a parent. We expect children in Years 3 and 4 to spend approximately 15-20 minutes per night on

home learning, and children in Years 5 and 6 to spend approximately 30 minutes per night. This is in line with the DfES guidelines that were issued in 1998.

- 5.2 Each year group has a recording system, which enables pupils, teachers and teaching assistants to be aware of home learning completed. Reading diaries are used to record when reading at home has taken place.

6 Inclusion and home learning

- 6.1 We set home learning for all children as a normal part of school life. We ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to the ability of the child, and we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way. When setting home learning to pupils who are named on the register of special needs, we refer to the provision maps for those pupils. We value and celebrate the cultural diversity of our pupils and their families, and we appreciate the enrichment that this brings.
- 6.2 This policy has been reviewed in light of the Dyslexia Friendly School Award.

7 The role of parents

- 7.1 Parents have a vital role to play in their child's education, and home learning is an important part of this process. We ask parents to encourage their child to complete the home learning tasks that are set. We invite them to help their children as and when they feel it to be necessary, and to provide them with the sort of environment that allows children to do their best. Parents can support their child by providing a good working space at home, by enabling their child to visit the library regularly, and by discussing the work that their child is doing.
- 7.2 We ask parents to check the home-school reading diary at least once a week, and to sign it as requested.
- 7.3 If parents have any questions about home learning, they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher. If their questions are of a more general nature, they should contact the headteacher. Finally, if they wish to make a complaint about the school home learning policy, or the way in which it is implemented, parents should contact the governing body.

8 Use of ICT

- 8.1 The use of ICT and the Internet has made a significant contribution to the amount of reference material available at home, and the ease and speed with which it can be accessed. However, our teachers expect their pupils to produce their own work, perhaps by editing something they have found, or by expressing it in their own words. The children are not achieving anything worthwhile by merely downloading and printing out something that has been written by somebody else.
- 8.2 There are many websites containing highly educational material, which can have a powerful effect on children's learning. Our school Learning Platform provides links to the sites which will best support the children's learning. Parents are advised always to supervise their child's access to the Internet.

- 8.3 Some of the most important educational software that we use in school can be bought by parents on a home-user licence. This ensures that children are using age-appropriate software in their work at home. The school will supply interested parents with details.
- 8.4 We discourage children from bringing USB memory sticks into school, because of the risk of viruses. However, when appropriate, teachers may suggest that a child's work is e-mailed to the teacher at school.
- 8.5 Parents of children in Reception are encouraged to use 'Tapestry', an online learning journal where photographs of 'wow' moments can be shared between home and school.
- 8.6 Some classes use their Twitter accounts to show a copy of the homework sent home each week.
- 8.7 Also refer to E-safety Policy

9 Monitoring and review

- 9.1 A named member of staff is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of this policy. We allocate special time for this vital task. The coordinator uses this time to inspect samples of the children's work and of the teachers' planning.
- 9.2 It is the responsibility of our governing body to agree and then monitor the school home learning policy. This is done by the committee of the governing body that deals with curriculum issues. Parents complete a questionnaire each year, and during the school's Ofsted inspection, and our governing body pays careful consideration to any concern that is raised by any parent. Our governing body may, at any time, request from our headteacher a report on the way in which homework is organised in our school.
- 9.3 This policy will be reviewed in two years, or earlier if necessary.

Signed:

Date: January 2016