

HOME LEARNING POLICY

Non Sibi Sed Aliis

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
Psalm 119, vs 105

“Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you. The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.” **Proverbs 4: 6-7**

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Review Date: Summer Term 2026

Next Review Date: Summer Term 2027

Reviewed By: Mrs S Thomasson

APPROVED BY THE HEADTEACHER – Summer Term 2026

Rationale

Home learning is an integral part of how pupils learn and make progress. Effective home learning can enhance learning and helps pupils to develop lifelong skills. Our aim is for home learning to be meaningful and coherent for all concerned. Home learning at Balshaw's should extend, consolidate or enhance learning that has taken place in the classroom.

The purpose of home learning

- Setting home learning is part of the Teachers' Standards: *Teachers should set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired.*
- Home learning should be used to consolidate the learning of the curriculum, further develop skills and prepare pupils for further independent study in the future.
- Home learning develops lifelong learning skills including organisation, time management, resilience and independence.
- To provide parents with the opportunity to support their child's progress and engage in dialogue about school.

How home learning is set

Teachers will explain the home learning task to pupils during the lesson, provide them with the opportunity to record the task and will respond to any queries about the task. Home learning is recorded by the teacher on Synergy where pupils will be able to see a description of the task and the deadline. Parents can monitor Synergy to check all home learning tasks that are due.

The types of home learning that will be set and why

Home learning tasks are set around the 3Rs – reading, retrieval and recall. Other tasks can be set at the discretion of the class teacher.

	Home learning tasks could include:	How the task will help students to become better learners:
Reading	Reading novels Reading key extracts of texts / literature Reading articles Guided reading Exploration of the etymology of key words	<i>'Language and literacy provide us with the building blocks not just for academic success, but for fulfilling careers and rewarding lives' (EEF)</i> Reading helps to improve vocabulary, communication, grammar and writing skills
Retrieval	Knowledge organisers Quizzes Self-testing Flashcards Graphic Organisers	Pupils create resources to support them to learn the content covered in lessons. These tasks prompt students to remember key information. The more we encourage students to retrieve information, the more chance we have of it 'sticking' and remaining in the long-term

		memory for pupils to retrieve with ease.
Recall	Learning spellings and meaning of key words Extended written responses to a question Producing a piece of work which will demonstrate understanding of a topic or concept Rehearsal of lines Use of platforms, for example Educake and Century Tech	The more practice that pupils have at spelling, the better chance they have of remembering key words. Spelling words correctly will help pupils throughout their life. Recall tasks require pupils to demonstrate they have understood and learnt key information and skills from the lesson.

Time to be spent completing home learning or self-directed study:

The times below are what we recommend pupils should spend on home learning or self-directed study:

Year 7 & 8: Approximately 60 minutes per day, maximum 20 minutes / subject.

Year 9: Approximately 90 minutes per day, maximum 30 minutes / subject.

Year 10 & 11: Approximately 1½ - 2½ hours per day, maximum 30 minutes / subject.

Home learning tasks will differ depending on the subject. Home learning tasks will not have a deadline for the following the day. Pupils should manage their home learning time to ensure they meet the deadlines. For example, they may receive home learning from four subjects on one day and no home learning the following day. They would be expected to spread the completion of the work over the two evenings.

There may be occasions when pupils do not receive home learning totalling the recommended times above. In this instance they should encouraged to use the time for self-directed study. Pupils must get into the routine of reflecting on work they have covered in lessons to fill any personal gaps in knowledge, understanding or skills and to consolidate their learning.

There are several effective learning strategies pupils can use during their self-directed study time:

Effective Learning Strategies for Self-Directed Study

LEARN TO STUDY USING...
Retrieval Practice
PRACTICE BRINGING INFORMATION TO MIND

HOW TO DO IT

Put away your class materials, and write or sketch everything you know. Be as thorough as possible. Then, check your class materials for accuracy and important points you missed.

Take as many practice tests as you can get your hands on. If you don't have ready-made tests, try making your own and trading with a friend who has done the same.

You can also make flashcards. Just make sure you practice recalling the information on them, and go beyond definitions by thinking of links between ideas.

HOLD ON!

Retrieval practice works best when you go back to check your class materials for accuracy afterward.

Retrieval is hard! If you're struggling, identify the things you've missed from your class materials, and work your way up to recalling it on your own with the class materials closed.

Don't only recall words and definitions. Make sure to recall main ideas, how things are related or different from one another, and new examples.

LEARN TO STUDY USING...
Dual Coding
COMBINE WORDS AND VISUALS

HOW TO DO IT

Look at your class materials and find visuals. Look over the visuals and compare to the words.

Look at visuals, and explain in your own words what they mean.

Take information that you are trying to learn, and draw visuals to go along with it.

HOLD ON!

Try to come up with different ways to represent the information visually, for example an infographic, a timeline, a cartoon strip, or a diagram of parts that work together.

Work your way up to drawing what you know from memory.

How to make flash cards:

- 1) Read through your notes. You must know what you need to learn!
 - 2) Highlight the key information you need to remember.
 - 3) Condense the information on to flash cards:
-  Write a question on one side and the answer on the other.
 -  Break complex information down into a series of questions.
 -  Mix words and simple pictures.
 -  Use mnemonics to remember key facts in order.
 -  Write a key word on one side and the definition on the other.



Graphic Organisers

Transform your learning into visual resources which illustrate the key points:

KEY PURPOSE OF THE ORGANISER	SAMPLE GRAPHIC ORGANISERS		
Recalling, grouping, classifying, summarising ideas	 Spider diagram	 Affinity/cluster web	 Concept map
Sequencing events, ordering ideas	 Cycle circle	 Flow chart	 Twister
Showing causal links (cause and effect)	 Futures wheel	 Bridge	 Fishbone
Deeper analysis—dissecting an idea into specific components and exploring different attributes	 Y chart	 T chart	 Venn diagram
Planning and decision making or reviewing	 Scales	 Comic strip	 ECG graph

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Expectations and Support

Curriculum Leaders are expected to:

- Write a department home learning policy which aligns with the whole school policy and states the frequency tasks should be set;
- Monitor home learning being set by teachers in the department on Synergy.

Teachers are expected to:

- Set regular home learning tasks that are appropriate and purposeful and align with the department and whole school home learning policy;
- Allow time in the lesson to set and fully explain the home learning task and answer questions pupils may have about the task;
- Set home learning tasks that promote independent thinking and make clear to students that AI must not be used to generate answers unless explicitly directed;
- Put a description of the task and deadline on Synergy under the Assignment tab;
- Provide adequate time for pupils to complete the task, the deadline should not be set for the following day;
- Provide additional support with the home learning if requested by the pupil or parent – for example paper copies of resources;
- Provide timely and effective feedback on the home learning task;
- Monitor the completion of home learning.

Pupils are expected to:

- Listen to home learning instructions in class and check Synergy daily for home learning tasks and deadlines;
- Spend an appropriate length of time completing home learning at home, complete it to the best of their ability and hand it in on time;
- Tick the tasks off on Synergy as they are completed;
- Be responsible learners and manage their study time at home to ensure home learning is not left until the night before the deadline when there may be a number of tasks to complete;
- Use the recommended time to completed self-directed study at home if they have no home learning tasks to complete;
- Complete all home learning independently. The use of AI to generate responses or complete tasks is not permitted unless explicitly approved by the teacher;
- Communicate appropriately with the class teacher if they are having difficulties completing the work, well before the deadline.

Parents can support by:

- Discussing home learning with their child to help and encourage;
- Encouraging and supporting their child to get into a study routine at home in a place free from distractions;
- Monitoring Synergy to ensure their child is keeping up to date with the completion of home learning;
- Checking their child's home learning when it has been completed – encourage high standards of presentation;
- Support their child in completing home learning independently, ensuring that AI tools are not used to generate answers;

- Encouraging their child to review work that has been completed in lessons and undertake self-directed study on the evenings when no home learning is set;
- Monitor the time their child spends on home learning and encourage them to complete the recommended amount;
- Notifying the teacher of any issues or problems that may result in the non-completion of home learning.