



## Home Learning Policy

### 1 Introduction

- Home learning is anything children do outside the school day that contributes to their learning. 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, talking with them at the dinner table or takes them to a museum are helping with their learning at home.

### 2 Aims and objectives

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 provide educational experiences not possible in school;
- to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future.

### 3 Rationale for Meadowbank Primary School's approach to home learning

- Home learning is an extremely important aspect of a child's education, and can add much to their development. 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 the partnership between teachers and parents. One of the aims of our teaching is for children to develop as independent learners, and we believe that home learning is a key method in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning.
- In December 2016 school undertook a 360 degree consultation in order to assess the impact of home learning activities on progress, pupil's attitudes to learning and home lives. The decision to hold the consultation was due to mixed feedback from parents through school's annual survey where dissatisfaction with the amount of home learning was identified however was also unclear as some parents wanted more work and others wanted less. Alongside this, informal discussions with parents made school aware of time constraints between home learning and family commitments that caused tensions in busy homes.

The outcomes of the consultation were as follows:

#### CHILDREN

58% of children said that they did not want to have set homework.

They told us that if they had more time they would:

- Do my own work about my interests
- Reading & read thick books
- Go out somewhere fun
- Go swimming, gymnastics, horse riding
- Learn to cook, cook with my mum
- Play with my brothers and sisters
- Help my mum do jobs
- Exercise, walk my dog
- Go to my dad's
- Go to Brownies
- Learn about the Egyptians
- Write poems
- Practice dancing



- Play the piano
- Ride my bike in the park
- See my cousins or go to Grandma's
- Learn to knit
- Write in my journal
- Play with mum and dad
- Make a comic
- Go to clubs
- Do my tutors homework
- Go for sleepovers and spend time with my friends

Children also said:

- By the time our parents come home from work, we have done the homework that we have to hand in and been to our clubs we do not have time to read or learn our tables.
- I do homework because we don't go out a lot because my parents work.
- I find it hard to do homework because I go to clubs.
- I spend half the week at dad's house and half at mum's house and do not get to spend much time with them.

PARENTS

- Almost 60% of parents responded that they did not want additional home learning tasks apart from reading, spelling and multiplication facts.
- This view was supported by school's discussions with parents. Although parents said that they understood that home learning was important a number felt that by the time family commitments and clubs were completed homework was rushed and reading was sometimes left so that written homework could be handed in.

TEACHERS

- Expressed that reading, learning spelling and multiplication facts were high impact activities and felt strongly that children should have time to develop independent projects and develop vocabulary via conversations within families.
- Teachers felt that essential activities such as developing a love of reading were being neglected in favour of recorded tasks which are not as essential in the development of life skills.
- Teachers would like to change home learning priorities to ensure that learning time is well used and children do not feel that they need to choose between hobbies, family time and learning.
- Following this consultation school leaders, teachers and governors decided that it was important to prioritise 'high impact' learning experiences that develop age appropriate skills whilst allowing children and families to have sufficient time together to have shared experiences and talk. It was felt that school must listen to our children who have told us that too much work at home prevents them from enjoying other valuable experiences that are part of childhood. We also need to ensure that school learning activities that are undertaken at home do not prevent families from feeling that they have sufficient time for core learning that need embedding by the end of each academic year, such as reading, spelling and multiplication facts.

#### 4 What does home learning look like for Meadowbank families?

Foundation Stage

- Children are given a reading book and library book to take home and read with their parents each night as soon as teacher's feel that they are ready for them.
- Parents are invited to a reading workshop where we give guidance to parents on achieving the maximum benefit from this time spent reading with their child.
- Parents are asked to do daily counting activities with children using numbers up to 10 – for example, counting the knives and forks when setting the table.
- Learning key words when they are sent home.

Key Stage One

- Children are given a reading book and a library book to take home and read with their parents each night.



- Children are given weekly spellings to learn well – in mixed lists and in sentences.
- Children are expected to know the 2x, 5x and 10x division facts & multiplication tables thoroughly when they leave KS1.

#### Key Stage Two

- Children are given a reading book and a library book to take home and read with their parents each night.
- Children are given weekly spellings to learn well – in mixed lists and in sentences.
- Children are expected to know the 3x, 4x & 10x division facts & multiplication tables thoroughly when they leave Yr4.
- Children are expected to know all of the division facts & multiplication tables up to 12x12 when they leave Yr6.
  
- 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 The role of parents

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 support children in developing a love of learning, discovering new interests and embedding the key skills needed by the end of each year in school to help their child's readiness for the move up through school. We ask that parents support their children in the following ways:

- a) READ, READ, READ and READ! – School believes that it is vital that children read every day and are supported to develop a love of reading as it is a key stone to academic success. We ask that parents support their children in reading daily and record their reading material in school diaries regularly. School will continue to ensure that reading remains high profile within school and will set a number of reading challenges during each academic year in which we expect all children to take part, with their families support. Each child will have a school reading book and a library book however; all reading materials are valued and enhance a love of literature. Therefore, we encourage children to have a varied diet of reading that extends beyond school issued books.

Examples of other reading materials that children should enjoy:

- Books linked to children's hobbies
- Favourite stories and books shared by adults and older siblings
- Stories from around the world, different cultures, faiths and world history
- Comics
- First News (Children's newspaper)
- Recipe books
- Poetry
- Plays
- Joke books
- Traditional stories and classics
- Different genres – e.g. science fiction (experience of stories in genres that they would not usually choose)
- Visits to libraries

School expects children to build a growing resilience to reading and to read for longer periods of time as they progress through school.

As a minimum children should read for the follow amounts of time each day.

- Yr1& 2 – 10 to 15 minutes per day
- Yr3 & 4 – 15 to 20 minutes per day.
- Yr5 & 6 – 20 to 30 minutes per day.

- b) Learn and over learn the multiplication facts
- Practice regularly at home so that they can be recalled at speed and used to solve problems.
- c) Learn and over learn weekly spellings
- Spellings should be thoroughly learned and used within writing rather than learning a list by rote.
- d) Talk to your children



- Build in time to talk with children each day, to model listening skills, to build vocabulary and language skills.
- e) Complete occasional unfinished work from class that may be sent home
- If work is uncompleted in lessons it may be sent home for completion.
- f) Have fun and new experiences with your children (cooking, clubs, museums, talking about interests and school learning, listening)
- Homework 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 homework 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 they develop their interests and skills to the full only when parents encourage them to make maximum use of the opportunities available outside school.
- g) Additional learning opportunities can be found on school's website (not to distract from the priorities of a-c)
- Via the school website we ensure that there are additional learning experiences that children can choose to complete. There are a range of options and children are always rewarded for completing these tasks and sharing their learning in school.
  - Alongside a number of web links other activities will be suggested. Sometimes we ask children to talk about a topic at home prior to studying it in school. For example, in a 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 work 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.
  - At Key Stage 2 we expect them to do more tasks independently, in Key Stage 1 there may be more parental involvement.
  - If parents have any questions about home learning, they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher.

## **6 Inclusion and homework**

- 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 provide tasks that all children can contribute to in a positive way. We value and celebrate the cultural diversity of our pupils and their families, and we appreciate the enrichment that this brings.

## **7 Use of ICT**

- The use of ICT and the Internet has made a significant contribution to the amount of reference and research material available at home, and the ease and speed with which it can be accessed. This alongside educational games and activities has enabled a new approach to home learning that school values and encourages parents and children to access. Teachers ensure that there are a number of learning opportunities and projects that can be accessed via school's website and recognises the hard work of children who complete them and bring them into school.
- There are many websites containing highly educational material which can have a powerful effect on children's learning. Our school website 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.
- Some of the most important educational software 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.



- We discourage children from bringing computer pen drives into school, because of the risk of viruses. However, when appropriate, a teacher might suggest that a child's work is e-mailed to the admin office who will ensure that it reaches the appropriate teacher.

## 8 Monitoring and review

- All staff are responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of this policy.

The governing board reviews this policy annually. The governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this if the government introduces new regulations, or if the governing board receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

| Policy History |                  |  |                            |
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