

Bitterne C of E Primary School



Policy for Homework Learning

Headteacher – Jen Johnson

Chair of Governors – Amanda Humby

Last review - December 2023

Next review - December 2024

INTRODUCTION

Homework learning in our school takes various forms depending on the age of the pupils. For example, for younger children it will be practising reading and the learning of spellings and tables to support their learning in school, while for the older children there will be increasing amounts of homework learning to prepare them for the demands of secondary school homework.

We are also mindful that children have opportunities and experiences outside of school that are equally important in developing and enriching their lives. Our policy and practice therefore recognises and values the wider learning at home that develops the whole child.

Reason for Policy

This policy has been written to:

- support a whole school, progressive and consistent, approach to homework learning;
- describe the purpose and procedures for homework learning;
- detail the responsibilities of all involved in homework learning;
- inform parents, staff and governors of the school's approach to homework learning.

The Purpose of Homework Learning

Homework Learning provision aims to:

- **primarily practise the basic skills of reading, mental maths and spelling at an appropriate level for the child;**
- extend, enhance and enrich work previously covered in school;
- provide opportunities for developing independent study skills;
- strengthen the partnership between home and school;
- provide progression towards independence and individual responsibility in Year 6 to prepare the children for transfer to secondary school.

Research by John Hattie (The Highly Influential Work) suggests that homework improves children's learning by 15%. This is the equivalent to an academic year over a child's entire school career.

Research by the Education Endowment Fund suggests that homework specifically designed around focussed areas of fluency can improve children's attainment by 5 or more months.

Approach to Homework Learning-

All children will be set homework learning tasks in reading, mental maths and spelling that are accurately matched to individual needs;

- **Reading** – children will fill in their reading logs at least four times per week. The teacher will ensure that the reading book is matched appropriately to the child's needs. Reading books will match to the child's current reading level and for younger children include the phonic sounds they are currently working on from the Little Wandle Scheme. There is also opportunity for children to choose books (fiction and non-fiction) that interest them that may not be at their current reading level. These are books that parents should read to their child, read in partnership with their child or engage them in a conversation about the pictures.

Grandparents or other adults in the family can also play a valuable role in supporting children with their reading.

“All primary school age children should either read to their parents or carers, listen to them reading or, if they are fluent readers, read on their own for at least 10 to 20 minutes a day.” (former Government guidelines on homework)

- **Mental Maths at Home** (Times Tables Rock Stars or Numbots) – children will complete mental maths challenges differentiated to their ability level from Year 2 to Year 6 (Please refer to Mental Maths at home guidance). Year 1 and 2 will use Numbots for their mental maths homework. Year 2 will start Times Tables Rock Stars during the summer term. Numbots will be introduced to Year R in the summer term.
- **Spelling** – Lists will be sent home each week from the Space Spelling Scheme Y2-Y6 and will be tested each week to move on or consolidate the existing list. (Please refer to Learning Spellings at home guidance in the Writing Policy). For younger children the spellings will be based on phonics and also tricky words from our Little Wandle Scheme. Children in Year 1 will be sent home phonics practice sheets, which include tricky words. In Year R, phonics sheets will start in the second half of the autumn term and spellings from January each year.

This element of homework based on reading, spelling and mental maths is our priority and depending on the age and needs of your child will take a minimum of between 1 hour and 2 hours each week.

Other home learning tasks (please see the overview at the end of the policy)

Where we can, homework activities will be shared with children and parents electronically through the use of **Tapestry (Year R) and Google Classroom (Years 1 to 6)**.

Where needed, children will also be able to access their homework electronically too. This means there will be a record of their homework on the online platform. Teachers will be able to comment on any homework submitted electronically. Children will need instruction in school on how to do this and parents may need guidance at the start of the year to familiarise themselves with how the online system works.

- Children in Year R will focus on their reading- phonics, writing and basic maths skills through fun and active tasks at home

	Reading	Spellings	Maths
Year 1	Little Wandle Phonics book: 3x a week 10-15mins. Reading for pleasure 1x a week 10-15mins. This book will need to be read with an adult's support or by the adult.	A weekly phonics sheet will be sent home based on the phonics and tricky words taught that week. Children will be tested on the tricky words every Friday and new phonics sheets will be sent home.	Numbots: 3 x a week for 10-15mins

Year 2	Little Wandle Phonics book: 3x a week 10-15mins. Reading for pleasure 1x a week 10-15mins. This book will need to be read with an adult's support or by the adult.	Weekly spellings list will be sent home to learn the spelling of common exception words. Children will be tested on these lists every Friday and new spelling lists will be sent home.	Numbots: 3 x a week for 10-15mins This will change to TT Rockstars at the start of the summer term
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- Children in Years 3 and 4 will usually be set home learning activities each week. (about 30 minutes each). Occasionally, children may be given an activity with an extended amount of time to complete this.
- Children in year 5 will be set a more sustained weekly home learning activity (maths or English). (40 minutes min each week).
- Children in year 6 will be set home learning activities each week on maths, English or both which should take about 1 hour in total.
- Homework may be based on CGP or similar task books. Oak National Academy resources or other activities via Google Classroom.

It is expected that children will continue reading, spelling and mental maths practice during holidays. Occasionally, project, maths or literacy homework will be set over a holiday period or transition activities over the summer. In Year 6, revision style homework can be set over a holiday for maths or English.

Well-being and Homework

Sometimes doing homework can lead to a negative atmosphere within the home. If this is the case, parents are asked to speak to their child's class teacher initially to discuss strategies to help.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Homework

If your child has a special educational need and you are concerned about their well being and homework, please discuss this with Mrs Bailey SENDCO or Miss Allen DHT. They will be able to come up with an individual plan for your child.

Useful homework strategies for pupils with a SEND

- Keep work organised with a homework calendar. A child with special educational needs often need a little more structure and guidance than other children, which is why a visual reminder can be useful.
- Communicate with your child's teacher/ SEND team. Homework should not put undue stress on pupils with additional needs. Please speak to your child's teacher/ SEND team to agree goals which you feel are achievable at home.
- Start to teach study routines and motivating your child. Try to have a designated area for homework with the equipment that your child may need ready to use. Support your child and praise them for the effort they have put in and for being independent. If you want the teacher to praise them for something specifically, write a brief note explaining why you are proud of them.

Children and parents who do not speak English as their first language

The school understands that parents who do not speak English fluently will find it harder to support their child while doing work at home, including reading, phonics and spelling activities.

Parents can always contact their child's teacher if they would like any homework instructions translated – we will use Google translate to do this. If needed, school will send a letter in the parents' home language asking them to email back in their home language with any concerns or issues, which we will also translate and then respond.

Staff should also highlight that the website has a translate function – under the main headings there is a translate button where many languages can be selected. These will translate all website pages.

Barriers to doing homework

Parents are encouraged to speak to class teachers if they experience difficulties with ensuring their child completes their homework. The school will support with access to IT hardware if needed to ensure the children can complete their homework smoothly, with limited impact on their family life. Bitterne CE Primary School will prioritise support for children eligible for Pupil Premium but will hope to help anyone who needs help or signpost them to organisations that may be able to help.

If any parent has trouble logging into Numbots, Time Table Rock Stars, Tapestry or Google Classroom, please ask them to email office@bitterneceprimary for support.

Responsibilities

Each stakeholder has a specific responsibility with regards to homework learning.

Teachers – are responsible for setting home learning activities appropriate to the child's age and providing feedback. Children may be given an A4 home learning book, however most learning will go home via Seesaw. **The mini project information sheet and home learning task sheets will be sent by Seesaw for parents and children to see.**

The Maths Leader and English Leader- are responsible, in consultation with the Curriculum Leader, for setting the expectations and procedures for mental maths, spellings and reading at home.

The Inclusion Leader- is responsible for ensuring that home learning tasks are at an appropriate level for SEND children. This policy can be adapted to suit the needs of any individual child in consultation with parents. This will be recorded alongside the SEND Passport to Success. (EduKey)

Parents - are responsible for providing their child with time, space, encouragement and support with any homework they have, including hearing their child read and assisting with the learning of tables and spellings. For mini projects and written homework, parents will be encouraged to make a comment in the homework book. Parents should speak to the class teacher at an early stage where there are issues related to working at home, so these can be resolved quickly.

Pupils - are responsible for undertaking any homework set and remembering to hand it in on time.

Curriculum Leader and SLT- are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently and that standards for homework are at least good. A range of monitoring activities to evidence

the impact of homework and feedback to the Maths Leader, English Leaders and SLT will be undertaken.

Governors- are responsible for holding the school to account for the standards for homework and agreeing the overall strategy for homework.

HOMEWORK FEEDBACK

Reading

Teachers will sign/ stamp and comment, if appropriate, in the reading log book at least once a week.

Spelling (including phonics)

The children will be tested each week on their own spellings.

Spelling tests are planned to take place on certain days, with children being advised of this on spellings sheets that are sent home. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, this may occasionally have to change at short notice.

Mental Maths

The children will be tested once a week in line with the Times Tables Policy.

Mental Maths tests are planned to take place on certain days. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, this may occasionally have to change at short notice. The Maths Lead will monitor mental maths provision and outcomes at least half termly. Year 4 and Year 3, due to the times table screening at the end of Y4 will have a greater focus in monitoring the provision.

English and Maths homework

Teachers will check that homework has been completed, and, depending on the task, children may 'class mark' or 'self-mark' their work under the direction of the teacher or teaching assistant. This may be followed by general feedback to the class or specific written guidance to individual children or feedback may be given online via Seesaw.

Rewards and Praise

We recognise and will reward the children for their efforts in homework tasks in accordance with our school rewards system, i.e. with House Points, stickers etc

Homework not being completed

For reading, spelling and mental maths- where a child does not appear to be reading at home or learning their spellings or mental maths, the class teacher will discuss this with parents face to face or by phone, where this is not possible an email will be sent. The teacher will offer support and ask parents to contact the teacher, if there are issues with homework.

In all year groups, where a child has not completed the work they will be given an extra day to complete the work. If the work is not handed in after the extra day, the teacher will contact parents to offer support in order to get the work done on time in future.

Where a child is consistently not doing home learning task, the class teacher should inform the DHT who will contact parents to discuss the situation and any barriers to doing work at home.

Parental feedback

Constructive feedback from parents about their child's home learning is also welcomed by the school. Ideally this should be done through Tapestry or Google Classroom.

To enable parents to feed back about a child's reading, we encourage parents to use the reading logs to communicate any views. Any further questions can be addressed to the class teacher via a message through the office.

In conclusion, we believe that working and learning at home is an integral part of school life and is a stepping stone to our children becoming lifelong, independent learners who are ready for the next step in their educational journey.

