

Home Learning Policy



Our Lady and St. Oswald's Catholic Primary School

APPROVED: June 2020
REVIEWED: June 2023
DUE FOR REVIEW: Every 3 Years

RESPONSIBLE PERSON: Headteacher

Home learning is anything that children do outside of the normal school day that contributes to their learning. Home learning encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents/carers to support a child's personal development. We believe developing the joy of learning both in school and at home encourages a life-long attitude to learning. Home learning allows parents, carers and the school to work in partnership for the benefit of their child. The purpose of this policy is to pay due regard to the wide range of experiences which enhance learning and give parent/carers supportive ideas for developing learning.

At Our Lady and St. Oswald's we believe that home-learning can be a part of a child's education and that our children can benefit from the mutual support of parents/carers and teachers in encouraging them to learn both at home and at school. One of the aims of our school is for children to develop as independent learners and we believe that home learning is one of the ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning. It can also be a way of establishing a meaningful dialogue between home and school.

If the children are working to their full potential in school hours, then a corresponding amount of downtime is essential for an acceptable **work/life balance**, although some form of home learning is required either as a means to consolidate or offer additional practice if needed.

Aims and Objectives

We feel that these are the core aims to successful home-learning:

- Recognise and celebrate learning that already happens at home
- Promote parents and children reading and talking together
- Provide opportunities for pupils to develop a growth mind-set and for pupils to feel proud about pushing themselves beyond what is compulsory
- Encourage perseverance, self-discipline and pupils taking responsibility for their own learning.
- Enable classwork to concentrate on those things that require the teacher's presence.
- Consolidate and reinforce children's skills and understanding, particularly on Early Reading, Phonics and Spelling and provide the opportunity and resources for parents/carers to become involved in their child's learning.

As well as believing in the importance of developing and consolidating learning, we also acknowledge the importance of free time in a child's growth and development. Whilst home learning is important, it should not be burdensome and should not have a negative impact upon a child's out of school activities.

The Role of Parents/Carers

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 parents to help their children as they feel necessary and 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 learning that their child is doing.

Parents are encouraged to read the weekly newsletter, visit the class webpage page and attend curriculum meetings when they can. All home learning activities can be accessed by visiting the [school website](#) to access weekly home learning tasks set by the class teacher. If parents/carers have any concerns or questions about home learning, they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher via the class email address which is highlight on the [digital weekly newsletter](#) or call the school office on 01691652849 or through an informal catch up at the start or end of the day.

In order for home learning to have the most positive impact, it needs to:

- Be enjoyable and rewarding for children
- Be age-appropriate and challenging

- Be linked to in-school themes
- Develop character, independence and resilience
- Be valued by children, parents and teachers
- Be responded to by the teacher – this response can be verbal or written. It could include points for improvement or rewards in line with school systems – house points and stickers.

Reading is essential:

We would hope that children read daily and that reading for pleasure is valued at all times and is not just confined to the total time spent completing home learning. We want to promote a love of reading in every child. We encourage parents and carers to discuss their children's books and ask questions about them to ensure that there is understanding of their book as well as accurate reading. Children benefit from being read to at every age as this develops vocabulary and understanding; it also models the enjoyment and importance of reading.

The Role of the Child

We believe that all children should take responsibility for remembering to take their reading books home and bring them back to be changed. To bring in enrichment home learning to celebrate a love of learning and achievement.

The Role of Teacher

Each teacher will;

- Set meaningful home learning that is appropriate to the child.
- It is imperative that we send home purposeful learning and not overload our young people.
- Provide feedback to the child and/or parent/carer where necessary verbally or through email, school App or in person.

Types of Home learning and Year Group Expectations

We set a variety of home learning activities that are encouraged but will never be a burden. We encourage the children to read by giving them books to take home to read with their parents everyday preferable but a least three time a week. It's never too early to start reading together. Even before they're born, babies learn to recognise their parents' voices. Reading to your baby from birth, even for just a few minutes a day, gives them the comfort of hearing your voice and increases their exposure to language.

As children start to learn to read at school, you can play an important role in helping to keep them interested in books. Find out what interests them, help them to find books that will be engaging and fun, and spend time reading the books they bring home from school together. Don't stop reading to your child even when they are a fluent reader. You can and should be reading books to them even in years 5 and 6. Select books that are more challenging and include words they have not encountered yet. This will improve not only their reading ability but also their writing. All types of reading should be recorded, not just school books, in the Reading Journal. Parents should initial the Journal when they have read to their child/children as **reading is a whole school expectation.**

We strongly believe that it is important for children to read at home and **record it in their Reading Journal at least three times in a one-week period.** Children will be awarded with house points and stickers when this is achieved.

We also ask children to learn the phonics or weekly spelling lists. Children in reception will receive 'Read Write Inc' phonic cards as part of their welcome induction to use at home. Not all home learning will necessarily be written, and it may involve playing number or word games or accessing a website game or activity, these are encouraged as optional extras. Sometimes we ask children to find

information about a topic at home, prior to studying it in school which may involve a trip to the local library. This will be shared by the class teacher in the weekly newsletter or via an App message.

The importance of practice:

Spellings and times tables are essential building blocks for future learning. Through spelling practise pupils develop excellent habits, fine motor skills and good spelling creates confident writers. Spellings are learnt through repetition; the earlier children can pay attention to detail in spelling, the better their outcomes will be. Children should write their spellings as many times as they can and put them in a sentence so that they know how to use words in context. This discipline will move their learning on quickly and avoid gaps in learning later in their education. Spelling Lists from Year 1 to Year 6 will be uploaded the class webpage half termly for you to view and practice at home. Pupils will also have the opportunity to practice their spellings in class. Children will be assessed on the spelling rule and common word lists at school and parents and carers will be updated on outcomes termly if not sooner. The same discipline applies to times tables. Pupils now need to know all their times tables by the end of year four. Daily practice will ensure that progress is made, and foundations are laid for the future.

Developing the whole child:

FINE MOTOR LEARNING:

Fine motor skill is the coordination of small muscles, in movements usually involving the coordination of hands, wrists and fingers:

- Writing, repetition of spellings, drawing, colouring
- Cutting with scissors, using computer key boards
- Buttoning clothing
- Turning pages, clapping games, finger exercises.
- Eating, chopping, cooking

Little hands need to develop dexterity and strength



GROSS MOTOR LEARNING

Large movements made by the entire body:

- Walking, running, jumping, swimming
- Riding a bike
- Climbing
- Jumping on a trampoline
- Enjoying the outdoors

These all have a positive effective on cognitive development and mental health.

TALK/DISCUSSION:

Being together and open with our children develops their social skills for life:

- Read stories
- Walk and talk
- Cook together
- Discuss the learning in the school day
- Ask children open ended questions e.g. why do you like.....

Interest in each other and the world needs to be modelled, children need to see every new person as a learning opportunity. Share the past with your children let them see the world through someone else's eyes. Help them to develop their own thoughts and ideas for the future.

This policy has been written in consultation with teachers, feedback from parent and carer surveys over a six-month period and pays due attention to educational research.

Education Endowment Foundation:

'Homework has been extensively researched. There is a relatively consistent picture that pupils in schools which give more homework perform better, although for primary age pupils the difference is small.'

'Parents can have a positive effect on homework completion and help children to develop effective learning habits.'

At Our Lady & St. Oswald's we believe that preparing pupils for the next stage of their education is essential. In the same way as we encourage pupils to develop healthy lifestyles and behaviours, we all

encourage them to have an excellent attitude to learning. This attitude paves the way for the next stage and enables pupils to move on with firm habits which go with them their whole life.

In Partnership we can give our pupils the best start in life. We also want to recognise and celebrate the learning that goes on at home that is not organised by school. This is just as valid as any learning challenge set by the school. Children can tell us about what they have been learning at home by drawing, sticking in leaflets or photos or writing about it. For example, a child might:

- Be learning to play a musical instrument
- Attend a football or swimming club
- Be taught how to cook something or make a snack
- Go on a trip with their parents to visit a museum or art gallery
- Learn another language
- Go and see a concert or a play at the theatre
- Go to classes about their religion
- Play an educational game online
- Go with their parents on a long walk in the park – maybe collecting conkers or making bark rubbings
- Attend ballet, judo or drama classes
- Belong to an organisation such as the Brownies or Cubs and attend regularly
- Be learning how to knit or sew or do woodwork or fix your bike
- Use the internet together with their parent to find out about something they are learning at school

This list is not exhaustive – anything where a child is learning something new counts.

Children with Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP)

The compulsory element of 'Reading' may be modified for children with an education and health plan, to best fit in with their needs. Where this is necessary this will be discussed with parents. 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. If a child has special educational needs, we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way. Where children have a Person Centred Plan (PCP), we refer to these when setting home learning. Parents are encouraged to work on targets from their child's PCP at home in addition to their child's home learning.

Monitoring and Review

The home learning policy will be formally reviewed every three years. However, parents complete a questionnaire every year and the school will pay careful consideration to any concern that is raised at that time regarding home-learning.

Equal Opportunities

This policy adheres to all the principles, aims and objectives set out in the school's Equal Opportunities and the Inclusion Policy.

Conclusion

These are the recommendations for effective Home/School Partnership for Home Learning. Staff recognise that it is important to have a home/school life balance, particularly when children have after school activities/clubs. Children are also tired after school and need time out, however reading with or to your child is important and practicing spellings and mental maths little and often is also useful.

Thank you for your support in this important aspect of your child's education. Please do not hesitate to ask your class teacher for any more advice in supporting your child's home-learning.