

## **Home Learning Guidance**

This policy document has been developed through consultation with staff, governors and parents and pupils of Atwood Primary Academy.

### **Introduction**

Home learning is any learning our pupils are asked to complete outside the normal school day that contributes to their learning. Home Learning activities are an important part of the home/school partnership and all children are expected to take part in a variety of tasks to enhance and support their learning.

Home learning plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. However, we also acknowledge the important role of play, free time and spending time as a family as a child grows and develops. While Home learning is important, it should not prevent children from taking part in out-of-school clubs and hobbies.

### **Aims and objectives**

The aims and objectives of Home learning are to:

- Consolidate and reinforce the learning undertaken in school and undertake some new learning
- develop an effective partnership between the school and parents/carers in pursuing the aims of the school and the development of their child
- Encourage pupils to develop the responsibility, confidence and self-discipline needed to study independently
- Promote cooperation between home and school in supporting each pupil's learning
- Encourage pupils and their parents to share learning experiences
- Help pupils develop good learning habits for the future

Our homework policy is designed to:

- Ensure consistency of approach throughout the school.
- Provide opportunities for parents and pupils to work in partnership and enjoy learning experiences.

### **The Nature of Home learning**

For children in Key Stage 1, the emphasis of homework is on developing a partnership with parents/carers and involving them actively in their child's learning. The homework at this stage will mainly consist of short activities of different kinds such as simple games, learning spellings and number facts and, of course, reading together. This provides a very important opportunity for young children to talk about what they are learning at school, and to practise key skills in a supportive environment.

As children get older homework provides an opportunity for them to develop the skills of independent learning, and this should increasingly become its main purpose. It is important that children should gradually get into the habit of regularly devoting periods of time, to study on their own. By the time children reach Year 5 and 6 their homework will cover a wider range of tasks and curriculum content. This will ensure that, in relation to homework their transition to Year 7/secondary school is as smooth as possible.

For all children, the main focus of homework will be on literacy and numeracy. It should be noted that Home learning can be set in many different forms with many different expectations and outcomes.

### **Inclusion and Home learning**

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. We appreciate the cultural and socio-economic background of our pupils and their families, and we take this into account when planning activities.

### **Time Allocation**

Home learning should not be too onerous or create stress within the pupil's family. If parents have any concerns they should not hesitate to contact their child's class teacher.

### **Home Learning Tasks**

Listed below are a number of example tasks and activities that might be given as Home learning. This is by no means an exhaustive list and is open to constant change, although many of these tasks and activities will be used on a regular basis. Home learning activities will change to meet the needs of the pupils involved and activities that might be occurring in class.

### **Homework Diaries**

Although all homework is published via email, pupils in Year 6 are provided with homework diaries to record Home Learning tasks and deadlines. This is in preparation for transition to secondary school. School diaries should be checked and signed by parents and carers weekly. There may be occasions when a child will miss playtime or part of lunch time, if they have not got their homework diary signed by the following week. Pupils will also be given homework books where much of their homework will be completed.

### **Reading**

**Fostering a love of reading** - We believe reading is a key aspect of developing a child's learning. We value parents and carers reading with and to their children because it allows them to enjoy texts they might not be able to read alone, therefore improving many key

skills which enable a child to access the wider curriculum. All children should read, or be read to for at least 15 minutes a day

Pupils should regularly:

Borrow books from school to read at home

Be encouraged to read by themselves at home, if they are reading independently, or read regularly to an adult

Discuss the book they have read with another person

Complete the Home School Reading Record

Visit public libraries to borrow books to read at home

Read newspapers, comics or magazines

Listen to stories read by another person

## **Spellings**

From Year 1 upwards, weekly spellings and tables will be given to pupils to learn.

Spelling tests will take place on Thursday or Friday – depending on the class timetable. Pupils will be required to respell spellings spelt incorrectly during the test using the look, cover, write, check method, as part of their spelling homework.

## **Times tables / Speed tables Years 2-6**

Weekly times tables / speed tables tests will be given and home work time allocated to learning times tables.

## **Personalised Learning Challenges**

Personalised Learning Challenges will be an inclusive form of homework which develops creative, presentational and information finding skills.

The children will record their own responses to the learning challenges set by teachers in their own individual and often unique way. Activities are intended to be open ended, allowing the children to make their own decisions on how to collect, record and present their homework.

Pupils have different learning styles. Learning is maximised when children engage in activities using their own individual learning style. The challenges will ensure that children have a good view of how they can shape their own learning and performance alongside their own personal learning targets.

The children can decide how they want to present their homework. We aim that the personal learning challenges will be fun and driven by the children, having an impact on our drive to develop a more creative and independent learner who understands their preferred style.

## **The Role of Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers have a vital role to play in their child's education, and Home Learning is an important part of this process. We ask parents and carers 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 and carers 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. For pupils in Year 6, we ask parents and carers to check the Homework diary at least once a week, and to sign it as requested.

If any child does not understand a task, parents should encourage their child to ask their teacher for further guidance. If parents and carers have any questions about Home Learning they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher.

### **The Role of the Class Teacher**

At the start of each academic year teachers will clarify expectations in relation to Home Learning through Welcome Meetings, supported by year group information leaflets.

Teachers will provide:

- A range of homework tasks and activities to consolidate and extend learning in class.
- Will ensure any homework is purposeful and links directly to the curriculum being taught.
- Work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals.

An explanation of Home learning tasks will be provided as necessary and may include guidance on how parents/carers might assist their child. This is to ensure pupils have a clear understanding of the tasks involved and a common understanding of the high expectations held of them individually, according to their ability.

### **Pupils Are Expected To:**

- Make full use of all the opportunities they are presented with;
- Tackle home tasks promptly and with a positive attitude;
- Take pride in presentation and content, acknowledging the high personal standard expected;
- Be organised so that necessary books and equipment are not left at school; □ Take responsibility for handing in the completed task on the agreed day.

### **Role of the Head Teacher and Governing Body**

- To check compliance of the Guidance.
- To meet and talk with parents when appropriate.
- To discuss with staff how far the guidance is being successfully implemented.
- To inform new parents to the school so that they are aware of the home/school agreement and what it entails.

## **Extra homework**

Children who take part in specialised lessons such as Booster Classes may sometimes be set extra homework to reinforce the work being done.

Additionally, children who work in a one to one situation with teaching assistants will sometimes be given extra homework.

In both cases, children should complete this work alongside their normal homework unless the child or the parents have been told otherwise.

## **Not Completing Homework**

The expectation is that children will complete their homework. However, if for any reason children are unable to complete their homework, parents/ carers should provide the class teacher with a note or contact the class teacher explaining why the homework has not been completed on the day the homework was due to be returned to school. There may be occasions when a child will miss playtime or some of a lunch time, if they have not completed homework.

If a pattern of uncompleted homework emerges, class teachers will speak to parents.

If the pattern continues, they will inform the Headteacher who will then contact parents.

A comment about the completion of homework may also be made on children's report.

## **No Homework**

If there is any reason why a child had not received homework, the class teacher will let parents know.

## **Pupil Absence**

If a child is absent for a length of time e.g. with a broken leg, the teacher and parent will agree what should be done, how it should be marked and what sort of help need to be given. It is not possible to give homework when parents take holidays in term times.

## **Feedback**

It is important that feedback is given to pupils, parents/carers and teachers as soon as possible.

This is given in a number of ways:

- immediately by parents or carers;
- discussion in class where homework is a part of the class work;
- through tests such as tables or spellings;
- individual comment from teacher on written assignments;
- pupils reviewing the work done in small groups;
- presentation of homework in class and school assemblies.

Teachers are interested to know how children carried out activities, whether they were too hard/ too easy/ interesting, etc. Comments can be recorded on the work.

Parents may also comment on whether the time allocation was appropriate or whether the activity was too short/too long. As with all school activities, parents are invited to discuss any queries with their child's class teacher.

## **Marking**

Teachers will mark children's homework in a variety of ways. For many homework exercises, the teacher will go through the work with the class, during which time any misunderstandings can be addressed. When this method is used, the children will mark their own work and the 'V' sign will be written on the child's work. Work will be initialled by the class teacher to acknowledge the children's efforts.

## **Use of ICT**

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.

**Parents are advised always to supervise their child's access to the Internet.**

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Senior Leadership Team will monitor the implementation of this policy and collate feedback from parents/carers, staff and pupils. This will be used to inform the annual review of the homework policy.

This policy will be reviewed

- as part of the school's development cycle
- in consultation with staff

## **Equal Opportunities**

The governors and staff are committed to providing the full range of opportunities for all pupils, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, social, cultural or religious background. All pupils have access to the curriculum, and the right to a learning environment, which dispels ignorance, prejudice or stereotyping.

