

BURTON BRADSTOCK CE SCHOOL

Home Learning Policy

Introduction

We believe independent learning is an invaluable, lifelong skill and one we aim to foster in our children. Setting home learning tasks is one meaningful way of establishing this habit.

Aims

Through this policy we aim to:

- Strengthen the partnership between home, school and child.
- Reinforce concepts and skills that the child is developing at school.
- Enable parents/carers to gain a greater understanding of the progress and development of their child.
- Enable children to develop strategies to help them find space and time to work at home.
- Demonstrate to children that the learning process is not confined to the school environment through home learning challenges.
- Encourage children to develop the responsibility, confidence and self-discipline needed to study independently.
- Prepare older children for the more intensive homework pattern that they will receive in Secondary school.
- Provide appropriate home learning activities for pupils who are self-isolating.
- Develop knowledge and skills of online platforms to support home learning.

Supporting Home Learning

We actively encourage family support with home learning tasks. Please never be afraid to help your child; it is not cheating. As they move through the school they may want less support or need you less but never feel you have to leave them alone to struggle on. In Years 5 & 6 the children are encouraged to work more independently in preparation for the next step of their schooling but nevertheless our key aim is always for children to enjoy their home learning, as well as develop those key skills that home learning brings, and if this requires some support from teachers or parents then this is the correct course of action to take.

If you or your child is unsure about a task that has been set please do not hesitate to contact the class teacher for support; the frustration that comes from not knowing how to help can cause tension at home and counteract the positive effects of home learning.

Home Learning Tasks

To effectively ensure continuity and build steps in learning each child is given weekly 'basic skills' home learning tasks. These will reinforce teaching and learning in Maths and English across every stage of their Early Years and Primary education.

These tasks include:

Reading

Reception and KS1

From the earliest age children benefit hugely from being read to so they can become familiar with 'book' language and the way books work. This will give them a good start when it's their turn to read the words.

From Reception, children will be given books to take home to share. At first you may be reading the books as adults and then gradually your child will take over as their skills build up through KS1. Daily practice is recommended throughout Reception and Year 1; even five minutes a day is valuable.

As well as learning to decode the letters and blending them to make words, talking about what is read is equally important to develop your child's understanding and sense that there is a real purpose to reading.

Each child has a reading record book for you to note down the reading you do together at home, make any comments or ask questions. Reading books are generally changed on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

KS2

The discussion that helps with understanding the text is the key role that home can play in moving your child's learning forward.

The majority of children are capable readers by KS2. However, their comprehension continues to need development and refinement, even at the very top of KS2. We would expect to see children reading and discussing books of their choice with their parents/carers at least three times a week, with you contributing comments in the reading record at least once a week. Reading records need to be completed by each Monday.

Home Reading Books

The books children take home are graded according to colour bands and include a wide variety of books from different schemes. Your child's teacher will move your child on when they can not only read the words easily but also understand and talk about what they have read. Having completed our school reading scheme (top level Black) each child will move onto 'free readers' which can be sourced from home or school.

Children may, at times, need adult guidance (teacher or parental) to broaden and extend their choice of text and level of challenge. These texts can include fiction and non-fiction texts as well as newspapers, magazines, reading on electronic devices etc.

Reading is a wonderful way for children to build and develop their vocabulary so we encourage the children to ask for meanings of unknown words and to use a thesaurus as they become more confident readers. During reading at home, it would be extremely beneficial for you to check your child's understanding of the words that they are reading.

Phonics and Spelling

Spelling across the school

Regular, daily spelling practice is extremely important to help your child remember key words and spelling patterns. Each child has a statutory word list for their age group, as set out in the National Curriculum, which children are encouraged to practise over the year. Games are a good way to practise the spelling of new words and we encourage anything that engages the children in this way. There are a number of links to educational websites on our school website, through the 'Parents/Carers as Partners' section.

Phonics in Reception and KS1

The children are fully immersed in phonics as soon as they start in Reception, when they are given a keyring to keep in their book bag. The different sounds are added to the keyring one at a time when they have been introduced in class. These phonic keyrings are a great way to practise the sounds with your child each day. Once the initial sounds have been learnt the children continue to learn phonics with the introduction of blends of two or more sounds together through into Key Stage 1. Reading is a good way to practise phonics as well as playing phonic and word games which we would encourage you to do regularly with your child.

KS2

In addition to the word lists, children in Key Stage 2 are set up with online 'Spelling Frame' accounts. Each week your child will have a spelling rule and can complete the online learning using 'Spelling Frame'. This home learning is usually set each Friday and is expected to be completed by the following Wednesday.

Weekly Tasks

Reception

The children will have a Home Learning book and each week the class teacher will set a Maths/Writing task. The home learning tasks will start in the second half of the Autumn term, once the children are settled.

KS1 and Lower KS2

Home learning tasks will be uploaded to the Seesaw learning platform. Each week the class teacher will set a task (varying between English/Maths/Topic) for the children to complete. The children have a week to complete the task (Monday to Monday in Robins, Friday to Friday in Kingfishers).

Upper KS2

The older children will be using Microsoft Teams for their home learning activities. Each week they will be set a Maths task (including the use of the online program 'My Maths') and also an English task to consolidate their learning in the classroom. Both tasks will be set on Wednesday for return the following Wednesday.

Maths

Maths across the school

We would also encourage regular practise of 'real life' maths. For example, measuring in DIY, using a recipe, calculating money, telling the time – the possibilities are endless and they all help to boost children's confidence. Also invaluable are the very many websites and apps which have fun ways to learn and practise maths.

Our aim is to make home learning in maths as relevant as possible.

Learning number bonds and times tables

If your child can remember and use their number bonds and times tables facts they can access many key aspects of maths in a confident way. As they move through the school they will be taught how to find patterns and 'tricks' of number bonds and times tables. Regular practice at home can make all the difference. The school subscribes to Numbots, an online programme, which is used to practise number bonds in KS1 and lower KS2.

The national expectation is that by the end of Year 2 children know their 2x, 5x and 10x times table facts and by the end of Year 4 all their times table facts up to 12x12. KS2 pupils use Times Table Rock Stars to practise these facts, and this can also be accessed at home for further practice. Year 2 pupils will also use Times Table Rock Stars from the Spring term.

These regular set skills are compulsory home learning and should be returned to the teacher in the time set. We will follow up missed home learning tasks and support families where necessary to ensure every child is offered the same opportunities to be successful. We believe that the expectation to complete tasks and hand them in on time reinforces good practice for future learning and helps your children to organise themselves. Younger children will need you to guide them and help them set up good home learning routines. Children in Upper Key Stage 2 will receive a greater amount of home learning tasks to complete in order to prepare them for the next step of their school life.

Celebrating Home Learning

- Children are encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their home learning, whether it is in a book or online.
- The home learning will be shared with the teacher and pupils in the class and achievements/effort celebrated.
- Any additional 'home learning' your child has enjoyed (i.e. not the set tasks) can be shared with us too; we would love to see what they have found/made/drawn/grown etc.