

BURTON BRADSTOCK CE SCHOOL

Home Learning Policy

Introduction

The school policy for home learning was developed and agreed by the whole staff during the Autumn term 2016.

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.

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 – your support could mean the difference between home learning being enjoyable and nothing being completed through frustration. 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 approach 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 and familiarising them with 'book' language and way books work so they have 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 Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

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 four times a week, with you contributing comments in the reading record at least once a week.

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.

Phonics and Spelling

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.

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 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.

KS2

In addition to the word lists children in Key Stage 2 have Spelling logs. Within these logs your child will record which words they have found difficult in their daily spelling practice and there will also be a record of their weekly speed spell score which we would expect you to sign each week to show that you have seen their logs. Again, regular practice of these words is encouraged at home as it is only through repetition that the spelling patterns and words become secure in your child's spelling vocabulary.

Writing

Fortnightly your child will be expected to complete a writing task, chosen from the list of suggested tasks in the cover of the Home Learning book (files in Class 4). This is an opportunity for your child to practise the skills that they have learnt in school and we hope to foster a love of independent learning. Class teachers may direct the writing with 'what I am looking for' tips or success criteria.

The writing tasks need to be brought into school by the time allocated. There will be opportunities for the children's writing to be shared and celebrated amongst their peers so that there is a definite 'audience' and 'purpose' for the children when they complete their home learning writing tasks.

Class 4 will also complete a Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar home learning activity which will consolidate their learning within the classroom.

Maths

Maths home learning is set every other week and will involve basic number skills, calculations and investigations, sometimes using the 'My Maths' online program. In Class 4 Maths home learning will be set weekly.

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, which can be accessed through the school website, 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 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.

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 practise for future learning and helps your child 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.

Presentation of Home Learning

- The vast majority of the home learning tasks will be completed in the home learning books or paper that is provided. For some of the more practical or open tasks this is not possible or recommended.
- Children are encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their home learning, using appropriate pens and/or pencils, especially in terms of colour.
- Parents/carers are invited to write constructive feedback in the home learning books/work.

- 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.

Other Home Learning

There may be other opportunities for home learning that will naturally spring from the topics we cover, the questions children raise, visits or visitors to school so we want to be open to some real creativity too.

The following are a list of activities that may be presented to your child during the school year as additional home learning alongside their basic skills work already mentioned.

- A longer term project linked to a topic
- A question to research at the library/on the internet
- Interviewing someone in the family about the past
- Collecting objects for a class display
- Making a cake for a school sale
- Bringing in photos to share
- Playing a game at home
- Watching a programme on television and discussing your views
- Keeping a record of a holiday in a diary or scrapbook