

# Eastwood Community School



## Learning at Home Policy

In order that our pupils can attain the highest standard (spiritual, moral, social, cultural and academic), we recognise the crucial importance of an active educational partnership between home and school. Homework is just one of the ways in which we seek to foster this partnership. Homework encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents to support children's learning.

### Aims and Objectives

Regular, well planned homework can:

- Enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development;
- Develop good work habits and self-discipline for the future;
- Encourage skills and attitudes which help children improve their educational performance;
- Help parents gain insight into their child's schoolwork and promote partnership between home and school;
- Provide opportunities for individualised work and develop skills of independent learning;
- Offer access to resources not found in school (public libraries, local museums etc.) ;
- Consolidate and reinforce learning done in school and assist in preparation for future class work;
- Provide a context for pupil/parent interaction.

Homework is seen as 'an essential part of good education which supports children's development as independent learners'.

### What is Homework?

Homework should not be a chore, but children should see it as an extension of their schoolwork. There may be occasions when some tasks are more challenging or difficult than usual as homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. We also acknowledge the important role of play and free time in a child's growth and development and therefore see homework as a time-limited activity.

We see homework as encompassing a wide range of possibilities. The following list gives just a few examples:

- reading with a parent
- a family visit to a local museum
- finishing off work from the class
- undertaking individual research for a project (possibly at the local library)
- learning number facts (times tables / spelling patterns etc...)
- literacy activities both written and verbal
- being an active member of a sports club or youth organisation
- going swimming or playing sport

It can be seen from this list that homework can be a two way process. Teachers may ask for tasks to be done at home, but are delighted to learn about children's success in other aspects of their lives and will seek to recognise this in school.

### **When teachers set homework they will ensure that:**

- It is always clearly related to current areas of study within the classroom.
- The task is made clear to children and matched to their abilities, especially for those pupils with special educational needs.
- In KS2 it is supported by homework diary in which children and parents can note success and record any problems encountered.
- Time scales for completion and submission are explicit.
- Work is marked as promptly as possible.
- Problems or difficulties encountered by children are dealt with swiftly.
- Regular completion of homework of a high standard is recognised and celebrated.
- The impact of homework upon the standards of children's attainment is monitored and included in the report to parents.
- All children will be expected to complete tasks. They will be given an opportunity to succeed in this through using a homework session in school leisure time (eg Golden Time / breaks or in after school homework clubs).
- A checklist in the front of each child's learning at home book will be signed by an adult in school to show how regularly they hand in homework. Pupils who do not regularly submit homework will be spoken to and given opportunities in school to complete it. If the situation does not improve, parents will be called in to discuss this with the teacher.
- Not all homework will be written so, for example, if a child decides to make a model then photographs can be stuck into the child's book as a record and the model brought into school. If parents do not have the facility to print/photograph then this can be done in school.

### **Types and amount of homework**

We increase the amount of homework that we give the children as they move through the school and suggest the following timescales based on year groups. Some activities such as reading / spellings / times tables must be done daily or weekly. Pupils may choose another 1 or 2 tasks from their half-termly menu of tasks to complete each week.

Foundation stage – Reception: (approximately 1 hr each week)

- High frequency words to read and spell (returned weekly)
- Reading daily (15 mins minimum)

Key Stage One: (approximately 1 hr each week excluding daily reading)

- High frequency words to read and spell and/or spellings to learn (returned weekly)
- Reading daily (15 mins minimum)
- Times tables to learn (x2, 5, 10)

Years 3 and 4: (One and a half hours per week)

- Spellings to learn
- Times tables to learn (all to 12 x 12)
- Reading daily (15 mins minimum)

Years 5 and 6 (Two hours per week)

- Spellings to learn
- Reading daily
- Times tables consolidate (all to x12) including related division facts

Children in year 2/6 may be given more if it is felt it will support their learning as they approach the SATs, for example revision work or tasks.

### **Half-termly menu's**

Each half term, year group staff will produce a menu sheet of tasks/activities linked to children's learning in class that half term or for the coming half term. There will be a variety of tasks which all children can access and from which the child can choose. This freedom to choose allows them to be more involved in their learning at home and also allows parents to be more involved which is of course beneficial. Tasks include:

- Make a model of something linked to a topic (eg famous building / rainforest / rocket etc...)
- Go out for a walk and collect items of interest / take photographs of what you saw (eg conkers/leaves/birds/trees etc..)
- Watch Newsround and summarise 2 of the stories.
- Practice a skill on a given website.
- Create a song or rap to remember vocabulary / concepts (eg maths vocabulary).
- Research your given topic and create a leaflet or powerpoint presentation about it (these can be printed out / done on paper and stuck in books).
- Design a revision poster with key facts the child needs to remember
- Learn a poem or short story by heart to recite to the class..
- Prepare something to show and tell.
- Cook tea or bake with a relative and take photographs or write about what you did and what skills you used (eg measuring / mixing / chopping etc...)

### **The Role of Parents**

Parents need to discuss / consider with their children the following questions:

- When is it a good time to do any homework?
- Where is the best place for homework to be done?
- What helps concentration?
- How long should my homework take me?
- Should I ask for help with my homework, even when it is finishing work started in class?
- Who should I ask for help and how much help should I expect?
- Ensure that children have sufficient, suitable equipment to complete homework tasks (a pencil minimum)

It is vital that parents display a positive attitude to homework and value its importance. It is also important for parents to recognise that it is the children's responsibility to complete the work. Managing time and completing tasks to deadlines is an important life skill which we must ensure our children develop.

The boundary between what many parents see as constructive help and what children view as interference, is indistinct and can vary from day to day. Parents need to listen to the child's explanation of what they have to do and discuss the work their child is doing and whether or not help is needed plus what form this might take.

If parents have any problems or questions about homework, they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher. If they wish to make a formal complaint about the school Learning at Home policy or the way it is implemented; parents should put their complaint in writing as stated in the Complaints Procedure.

### **Pupils with special educational needs**

We set homework 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 needs, we endeavor to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way. The menu of tasks includes a variety of activities which all children can access regardless of their abilities/skills/needs.

### **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to agree and then monitor the school Learning At Home policy. The Governing Body may, at any time, request from the Head Teacher a report on the way homework is organised in the school.

### **Associated documents**

- Complaints policy
- SEND policy
- Exemplar menu of homework activities
- Record keeping sheet for Learning at Home

### **Document Control**

**Adopted & ratified by Governors:** (date) **January 2017**

**Signed:**

**Due for review:** **January 2019**