

# Home Learning Policy

## Blackawton Primary School



At Blackawton Primary School we believe home learning is anything children do outside the normal school day that contributes to their learning, in response to guidance from the school. Home Learning encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents/carers to support the children's learning.

### **RATIONALE FOR HOME LEARNING**

Home learning can be an important part of a child's education, and can add much to their development. We see home learning as an important example of cooperation between teachers and parents/carers. One of the aims of our teaching is for children to develop as independent learners, and we believe that doing home learning is one of the main ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning. Home learning can play a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. However, we also acknowledge the important role of play and free time in a child's growth and development. While home learning is important, it should not prevent children from taking part in the activities of various out-of-school clubs and of other organisations that play an important part in the lives of our pupils.

We are well aware that children spend more time at home than at school and we believe that they develop their interests and skills to the full only when parents/carers encourage them to make maximum use of the opportunities available outside school. We also acknowledge that too much home learning, which seems lacking in purpose and clarity can have a detrimental effect on children's confidence and the quality of family life.

### **In line with this school will ensure that:**

- children will always have at least three days to complete and return home learning to school
- the setting of home learning will be flexible around days in the calendar that families may wish to mark or celebrate (e.g. Halloween, Bonfire Night, Shrove Tuesday)
- when setting home learning teachers will be sensitive to family celebrations, e.g. birthdays
- home learning will not be set the night before or the night after an educational visit
- home learning will be optional during school holidays

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

#### **The aims and objectives of home learning are:**

- to enable pupils to make maximum progress
- to help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner
- to promote cooperation between home and school in supporting each child's learning
- to enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered in sufficient depth
- to provide educational experiences not possible in school
- to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school, and to allow children to practise skills taught in lesson
- to help children develop good work habits for the future

**Article 3:** The best interests of children must be the primary concern in making decisions that may affect them. All adults should do what is best for children. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.

## **INCLUSION AND HOME LEARNING**

We recognise that children have individual learning styles, which means that some tasks can be completed in a number of different ways, while others demand a particular approach. 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 value and celebrate the cultural diversity of our pupils and their families, and we appreciate the enrichment that this brings.

### **THE ROLE OF TEACHERS**

- ensure children receive constructive feedback regarding the quality and attainment of completed tasks
- encourage all children through praise and recognition of individual efforts
- respond, where appropriate, to parent/carer comments
- discuss any problems with the child (or parent/carer, if appropriate) as they arise
- keep to agreed days and times for setting and collecting work
- give work which allows children to reinforce, improve or extend learning
- provide tasks which are matched to a child's ability and learning style
- explain clearly the purpose of the task and how to complete it

### **THE ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS**

Parents/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/carers to encourage their child to complete the home learning tasks that are set. We invite them to help their children with home learning as and when they feel it to be necessary. We take the view that children are likely to get more out of an activity if parents/carers get involved – as long as they don't take over too much!

Parents/carers can support their child by providing a good working space at home and by discussing the work that their child is doing. Parents/carers are to provide feedback on, or seek clarification, about home learning. We ask that parents/carers keep school up to date with changes in their domestic internet connectivity (see below THE SCHOOL'S HOME LEARNING PROVISION for explanation).

We also ask that they carefully monitor how long in any one evening children are spending (in total) on home learning.

Parents/carers should note that medical experts recommend that children should spend no more than thirty minutes at a time looking at a computer screen.

### **THE SCHOOL'S HOME LEARNING PROVISION**

Home learning will be set in English, Mathematics and Research. The school has access to a number of high quality 'on-line' resources, which effectively support children's learning. The school will take into consideration the ICT connectivity available in the homes of different families and will, where possible, make alternative arrangements for the completion of 'on-line' home learning. In support of this the ESW E-Safety Policy may also be found on the school website. The safety of our children is paramount in all matters regarding Internet use. We advise parents/carers to always supervise their child's access to the Internet.

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## READING

### RECEPTION CLASS

#### Daily Reading

In Reception parents will be informed of the themes, letter sounds and high frequency words that the children are learning in school each half-term. Starting in the autumn term and continuing all year, the main emphasis is on reading at home. This should be done in two ways:

- **Adults reading to children**

Parents should encourage children to point to words as they are being read. Discussion about the books is also important. A book at bedtime is an ideal opportunity in this aspect of their reading to share pictures, main characters and events in the book.

- **Children reading to an adult**

From the start of the year, children will start bringing appropriate books home to read to an adult. Again, encouraging the child to point to the words as they are being read is important. Discussing the story and the characters and asking questions about the book will help with the child's understanding of language.

#### Letter formation

At the beginning of the child's first term in Reception, the Reception teachers will provide parents with a sheet to support children with letter formation. This shows where to start and finish when forming each letter and what each letter should look like. Giving children the opportunity to practise forming letters and also developing drawing skills with a variety of different tools will give them valuable practice. The important thing is to watch them and correct any mistakes sensitively so they don't fall into bad habits.

#### Tricky words (common words that are not easy to sound out, e.g. the, was) and Phonics

Children learn to read tricky words as part of phonics lessons. Parents will be given a list of the words and sounds the children are learning to read and spell. Regularly practising reading them, reading and writing them in Reception, looking out for the words in reading books, and playing games with them will really benefit the child. For some children, it will be useful to practise writing the words as well as reading them. The teachers may send home games to give parents some ideas. It would be useful if these words were practised on a regular basis in the summer holiday before Year 1, as well as parents continuing to share books with their child.

### YEARS 1 & 2

For children in Years 1 & 2 we encourage parents to work together with their child to support them with their home learning.

Reading on a regular basis is vital when children are in Years 1 & 2. Children will bring their reading books home every evening, and the role of the adult is to listen and support them. It is important to remind them to use different strategies to read new words - sounding out the word, looking at the pictures, and looking for words within words are ways in which the child can read an unknown word. Just as important is discussing the book to check that the child has understood what they have read. Children will have a reading record book which parents / carers should sign or comment in each time they read with the child.

### YEARS 3 - 6

#### Reading

Children may read to an adult, with an adult, or to themselves in the presence of an adult. The story and characters should be talked about, and new words discussed. Older children need a clear understanding of the story that sometimes will go beyond the literal meaning of the text. Children will read texts that are more detailed and will take longer to read. They should be encouraged to read all types of texts, including non-fiction. Even though reading may not be a directed task from the teacher, it should be engaged with on a daily basis.

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## Reading Journals:

For children to make good progress in their reading, they should read for a short period of time every day. To help the children keep track of what they read and develop their independence, we will be sending home a reading journal.

### How to use the Reading Journal:

#### What your child should do:

- Choose a high-quality text to read
- Complete an Accelerated Reader Quiz in school in relation to each book read
- After reading, write down the date, title and author of the text.
- Bring the reading journal to school and take them home every day.
- Children may also choose to complete a reading activity (AF – Assessment Focus). These activities can be found inside their reading journal and help develop the children's thinking and literacy skills based on the text they have been reading.
- Minimum of:
  - Year 3 – one comment daily, 5 days per week
  - Year 4 – one comment daily, 5 days per week and an AF completed once every two weeks
  - Year 5 – one to two comments daily, 5 days per week and an AF completed once every two weeks
  - Year 6 – two comments daily, 5 days per week and an AF completed once every two weeks

#### What you should do:

Encourage your child to independently complete their reading journal. Guide or assist them as necessary.

#### What the teacher will do:

Children will be asked to regularly share their reading journal with their teacher and discuss what they have read. This would also be an opportunity for the pupils to share their chosen, completed reading activities.

#### SPAG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar)

Each child has their own username and password allocated for the use of the <https://www.spag.com> website. These will be stuck into your child's reading journal. Your child's teacher will ensure there are regular activities available for your child to complete. Teachers are able to monitor how individuals are getting on and pinpoint areas of SPAG they are confident or need assistance in.

## MATHEMATICS

Times Tables are tested weekly, with the aim that children improve on each week's personal performance. Home learning is sent home weekly for each pupil to practise the tables they are learning and for them to recognise the corresponding division number sentences. The children can use the SPARX website, <https://sparxmaths.uk/>, to practise their tables in a fun, interactive and timed way, hopefully improving week by week. As with SPAG, this programme enables your child's teacher to monitor their progress and sets personalised targets for them to work on. Usernames and passwords for this site are also stuck into reading journals.

## RESEARCH

One piece of research home learning, linked to current topic work, will be set at the start of each term. The format may vary, e.g. pupils may be asked to create a 3D model, or prepare a PowerPoint presentation. Structured classroom activities will be organised over an extended period of time to then discuss and evaluate each pupil's work. Pupils will learn about research carried out by other pupils and will be asked to then teach some of the information they learn to members of their own family. Classes will also be able to showcase their findings. It may be that a class generates, through its evaluation of a set piece of research, another related 'spin-off' piece of research. If this happens the outcomes of pupils' efforts will be evaluated as described above.

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## GAMES

Every year group may periodically send games home to support and extend work being done in school. This is also intended to provide families with a fun experience and opportunities to talk, the value of which cannot be overstated.

### What does home learning look like in Blackawton?

In Class 1 – Reception

- Reading daily

In Class 2 – Year 1 and Year 2

- Reading daily
- Themed research set in the first week of each half term
- SPARX - <https://sparxmaths.uk/>
- SPAG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) - <https://www.spag.com/>

In Class 3 - Year 2 and Year 3

- Reading daily
- Themed research set in the first week of each half term
- SPARX - <https://sparxmaths.uk/>
- SPAG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) - <https://www.spag.com/>

In Class 4 - Year 4 and Year 5

- Reading daily
- Themed research set in the first week of each half term
- SPARX - <https://sparxmaths.uk/>
- SPAG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) - <https://www.spag.com/>
- Big Spellings (Personalised lists in reading journals)
- Termly Extreme Spellings

In Class 5 - Year 5 and Year 6

- Reading daily
- Themed research set in the first week of each half term
- SPARX - <https://sparxmaths.uk/>
- SPAG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) - <https://www.spag.com/>
- Big Spellings (Personalised lists in reading journals)
- Termly Extreme Spellings

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