



# **School's Home Learning Policy**

Reviewed: October 2023  
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# Dobcroft Junior School

## Home Learning Policy

### Introduction

The school's policy for home learning was developed and agreed by the teachers and Senior Leadership Team.

### Aims

Through this policy we aim to:

- Ensure that parents are clear about what their child is expected to do.
- Ensure consistency of approach throughout the school.
- To use home learning as a tool to help continue to raise standards of attainment.
- Improve the quality of the learning experience offered to pupils and to extend it beyond the classroom environment.
- Provide opportunities for parents, children and the school to work together in partnership in relation to children's learning.
- Encourage pupils and their parents to share and enjoy learning experiences.
- To consolidate, reinforce and extend work covered in class by providing further opportunities for individual learning.
- To practise or consolidate basic skills and knowledge, especially in maths and English.
- Encourage children to develop the responsibility, confidence and self-discipline needed to study independently.
- To prepare pupils in Y6 for their transfer to secondary school.

### The Nature of Home Learning

It should be noted that home learning can be set in many different forms with many different expectations and outcomes. It is important to remember that when expecting and setting home learning there are a number of points to consider:-

1. The nature and type of home learning changes throughout a pupil's school career.
2. Amount and frequency of home learning should increase as a pupil gets older.
3. Home learning should not cause undue stress on the pupil, family or the teacher.
4. It will not necessarily come in the form of a written task.
5. Home learning should be set regularly from Year 3 to Year 6.

### Recommended Time Allocation

Home learning should never be too onerous nor should it ever create stress within the pupil's family. If parents have any concerns they should not hesitate to contact the school. Normally, more than one day will be allowed for the completion of a home learning task, except where daily practice is to be encouraged e.g. reading, spelling and times tables.

The staff and Governors realise that many of our children are encouraged to partake in an enriched and varied programme of activities outside school hours such as Brownies, Cubs, swimming, dance, music, drama and football activities etc both as part of the Extended Schools' activities and independently of school. These activities restrict the amount of time available to children to undertake home learning and form valuable learning experiences in their own right. Therefore, following discussions by staff, children and feedback from parent questionnaires, the following recommendations as appropriate time allocations for home learning activities have been agreed upon:

- Year 3 – 30 minutes a week
- Year 4 – 40 minutes a week
- Year 5 – 50 minutes a week
- Year 6 – 1 hour a week

These times are in addition to reading. Children can, of course, do more than this if they are interested and engaged with the task. Similarly, if a child has found the task challenging, parents may decide to restrict the amount of time taken, even if the task is unfinished.

### **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. All home learning tasks and activities will have a clear purpose and assist pupils in the process of their academic development.

These may include:

- Maths activities e.g. work to reinforce week's learning objective, practising calculations, games, investigations, links to web games etc. Dobcroft Junior School buy into My Maths, an interactive maths programme which may be used to support the learning.
- Practising times tables. Dobcroft Junior School also buy into Times Table Rockstars which can support children in this. Children need to recall and use their multiplication facts as follows:  
-2, 5 and 10 multiplication tables by the end of Year 2;  
-3, 4 and 8 by the end of Year 3;  
-6, 7, 9, 11 and 12 by the end of Year 4.
- Practising spellings. Children will be given a list of 10 spellings per week with a particular spelling rule or pattern to learn. Dobcroft Juniors use Spelling Shed as their scheme of learning to support the teaching and learning of spellings.
- English activities e.g. punctuation and grammar activities, reading comprehensions, handwriting and short pieces of writing.
- Work could be linked to the wider curriculum area such as; Science, Topic and so on. It could take many forms: preparing a talk, completing a piece of research, making a model or conducting an interview. The nature of this work may be more open ended than in other areas.

We invest in CGP books to provide a structure for both English and Maths home learning. These books provide examples and guidance for parents and prepared resources for teachers that match the curriculum objectives. The majority of English and Maths activities will come from these books.

### **Reading should be practised in addition to the above.**

Children should read at home at least 3 times per week for a minimum of 15 minutes. Children may read to an adult, with an adult or read to themselves in the presence of an adult. Children should be encouraged to read all types of texts including non-fiction. The texts should be discussed with an adult and unfamiliar words should be clarified. Older children will read texts that are more detailed and that sometimes will go beyond the literal meaning of the text such as skills of deduction and inference.

### **Reading Record Diary**

Parents and carers are encouraged to keep a record of the books that their child has read and to comment on significant achievements or anything they may have struggled with. The reading records must be handed to the teacher once per week to enable the teacher to monitor reading at home.

## **Why will children sometimes be given extra home learning?**

Children who take part in specialised lessons such as 'Booster' classes, may sometimes be set extra home learning to reinforce the work being done.

Teachers may sometimes set additional work for pupils to support any plans for underachievement or slow progress.

Children should complete this work alongside their normal home learning unless the child or the parents have been told otherwise.

If the child is finding they have too much work then parents should speak to the child's teacher or the person running the extra sessions.

## **Children with Additional Needs**

If a child has additional needs, the home learning task may need to be modified for them. If there are any issues with this, parents should feel free to speak to their child's class teacher who will talk this through with them.

## **Role of the Class Teacher**

- Guidance at the beginning of the year will be given by class teachers so parents know when to expect home learning and when to ensure it is handed in.
- To provide a weekly overview of the home learning to be completed upon the Class Dojo portal.
- To provide an explanation of home learning tasks to parents when necessary and give guidance of how they might assist their child. This may be done by a note with the work.
- To set up regular home learning in an easily followed routine that is appropriate to the needs of the child.
- To ensure that home learning is set consistently across classes in the year group.
- To set home learning that takes equal and racial opportunities into account.
- To ensure any home learning is purposeful and links directly to the curriculum being taught.
- To reward and praise children who regularly complete home learning tasks.
- To mark home learning when necessary and give feedback to pupils. (See later section on marking)

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

- To check compliance of the Policy.
- To meet and talk with parents when appropriate.
- To discuss with staff how far the policy is being successfully implemented.
- Inform new parents to the school so that they are aware of the Home learning Policy and what it entails.

## **Role of Parents/Carers**

- To support the school by ensuring that their child attempts the home learning to a high standard and hands it in on time.
- To provide a suitable place for their child to carry out their home learning.
- To encourage and praise their child when they have completed their home learning.
- To become actively involved and support their child with home learning activities.

- To make it clear that they value home learning and they support the school by explaining how it can help learning.
- Communication during a task between a parent and child is sometimes more important than the finished product e.g. a mathematical rule may have been discussed in depth without much work having been completed.
- At Dobcroft Junior School we are very keen for parents to support and help their children with home learning. We take the view that children are likely to get more out of an activity if parents get involved as long as they do not take over too much. However, there are times when we will want to see what children can do on their own. It is particularly important, as they get older, for children to become increasingly independent in their learning. If a parent is unsure about what their role should be, they should discuss it with their child's teacher.
- Termly overviews are sent home to inform parents and carers of the current learning topics. If your child wants to do additional work based on these topics, they are very welcome.

### **Role of the child**

- To make sure they understand the tasks that have been set.
- To put in the same level of effort as would be expected of class work.
- To hand in the home learning on time.
- To take on board any feedback about home learning.

### **Equality & Equal Opportunities**

All children have equal access and inclusive rights to the curriculum regardless of their gender, race, disability or ability. We plan work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals. Dobcroft Junior School is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential.

### **Celebrating Achievements Out Of School**

Efforts are always made to celebrate the achievement of children outside of school, e.g. in swimming, dancing, football, French, musical instruments, Beavers, Brownies etc. send in details via email, the child or in person and we will share with the class or in an assembly.

### **Marking**

Due to our staff using formative marking and helping children realise their next steps to progress, teachers' marking workload is already high. It is therefore important to us to protect the workload of our staff to help maintain a work-life balance. Marking of home learning therefore needs to be manageable.

Marking may be completed in a variety of ways, some of which will not be written. Wherever possible staff should try to give feedback on any home learning that is returned by pupils. This will help to give the whole process of setting and completing home learning a higher profile and status. It will also send out the message that home learning is an important and valued aspect of school life. Feedback may be given to individual pupils, or to groups of pupils. Generally, the work will be initialled or stamped by the teacher to show they have marked it. On other occasions the work may be marked orally with the child or the class and there will not be evidence from the teacher on the child's sheet. Marking home learning is one way of giving them feedback on how well they have met the objectives of the work. Sometimes, home learning will be marked in class by the pupils themselves, when any misconceptions can then be addressed. Teachers generally will not mark home learning that is handed in late.

Home learning may sometimes be set for completion during the holidays.

If children are absent due to illness we will not send home learning home. We would assume the child was too ill to work.

If a child is absent for a length of time e.g. with a broken leg, the teacher and the parent will agree what should be done, how it should be marked and what sort of help needs to be given. **In such circumstances the teacher should consult the Head Teacher first.**

It is not possible to give home learning when parents take holidays in term time.

Parents/Carers who have queries about home learning should not hesitate to make an appointment to see their child's class teacher or target group teacher.

### **What about children who don't complete home learning?**

Although home learning is optional, the expectation is that children will complete it. If there are any problems with children not completing home learning, then the teacher will speak to the parent to discuss.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed in three years

Written by: AK and PH

Ratified by the Head Teacher- July 2020