Heaton St. Barnabas' CE (VA) Primary School

Policy For

Homework

This policy was approved by Curriculum Committee

On: 14th January 2025

Position: Chair of Curriculum Committee

Heaton St. Barnabas CE Primary School

Policy for Homework

School Vision

All our children are inspired to achieve their full potential and flourish in our caring school community where:

- Everyone is valued
- Develop confidence & thirst for knowledge
- They trust in God to realise their talents

Core Values

Our core values that form positive relationships are:

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Honesty
- Kindness
- Enthusiasm
- Happiness

The aims of the school's homework policy are to:

- ensure that there is a consistent approach to homework throughout the school
- ensure that parents and carer's understand the school's expectations of themselves and their children regarding homework
- prepare children in year 6 for secondary transfer.

The aims of homework are to:

- extend and support learning through preparation, reinforcement and revision
- encourage children to develop confidence, self-discipline, independence and a sense of responsibility for their own learning
- provide opportunities for parents and children to enjoy learning together

The purpose of homework changes as children progress through the school. Short activities of different kinds - simple games, learning spellings, research and number facts and reading together - provide a very important opportunity for young children to talk about what they are learning to an interested adult, and to practise key skills in a supportive and secure environment. As children get older homework provides an opportunity for children to develop the skills of independent learning. As children progress through key stage two they should be encouraged to work for regular, short periods, by themselves.

Although the emphasis will usually be literacy and numeracy, by the time children reach Year 5 & 6 they will be given a range of tasks, including preparation and research, covering different curriculum areas.

There is a clearly defined weekly schedule of homework so that children and parents know what work to expect. Parents and children are reminded of the expectations at the beginning of each half term when the children bring a 'half term forecast' home. A copy of half term forecasts is placed on the school website at www.hstb.co.uk in each year group area.

The type of work that will be sent home

For homework to be really effective there needs to be involvement of parents / carers for some of the time. It is important that there is a balance of tasks and activities that are achievable by the children and that marking and feedback is manageable for the teacher.

How parents can help to support children

It cannot be emphasized enough that homework encourages children to develop a sense of personal responsibility for their learning and helps them to develop as independent learners. Parents have a vital role to play in supporting and encouraging children to complete their homework. It will really help children if parents/carers can:

- provide somewhere peaceful for children to work without the distractions of television, other family members and pets;
- provide a suitable place, equipped with resources and materials appropriate to the task;
- encourage and support to children when they need it;
- support the school in explaining to children that homework is valued and aids learning;
- encourage pupils and praise them when homework is completed; and
- be actively involved in the homework of younger children in particular.

Time to be spent on homework
Please see the schedule at the end of this policy for the amount of time suggested.

Homework Diaries

From Y4 to Y6 all children have a homework diary and details of homework that children are expected to complete is written into this. Y1-3 have a reading record diary. The diary should be brought to and from school by children each day, and should be signed by parents at least once each week to confirm that parents have read the diary and checked that homework has been completed on time.

School will help to support parents by:

- Ensuring that homework is manageable and tailored to the needs and abilities of children
- Ensuring that homework is sent home on the specified days so that children and parents know when to expect homework and when it should be returned
- Providing short guides to teaching methods in things such as maths, spelling, reading and phonics
- Consulting with parents to identify the support that parents would like and what type of support would be most helpful e.g. through 'Positive Parents', surveys etc.
- Providing workshops or more personalized advice for parents where there is demand

Some guidance is provided in the appendices to this policy

Reading

One of the most important homework activities is reading. For children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 the main homework activity will be regular, daily reading with parents / carers sharing books together. In the reception classes children will be given sound or word activities which should be practised daily. The very youngest children may be given flash cards of key words, sounds and picture books to take home to share. All children may read themselves, listen to an adult read or, if they are fluent readers, read on their own in the presence of an adult for a period of time. The book should be talked about, new words discussed and pictures and characters enjoyed together.

Reading practise and listening to others read continues to be essential throughout the primary years. Younger children may do this through reading a school reading book or a storybook from home; older children may be expected to read a reference book to research a topic from time to time.

All children need a book bag to keep their reading book clean and to carry their books to and from school. All children have a Reading Record Book which is intended to be used by parents and teachers to record comments about the reading progress. Parents / carers are encouraged to make an appropriate comment on the child's performance. For the youngest children, parents may prefer to use symbols such as smiley faces instead of written comments.

Spellings

Children will be given spellings to learn every week from Year 1 onwards. In Reception they will be given sounds to learn and simple words. In Years 1 and 2 the children are given a variety of words to learn, ranging from topic words, high frequency words (I, am, when, there, the, said etc.) and letter strings taken from the Literacy Curriculum. By the time children begin Year 3 we expect children to be able to read and spell 'high frequency' words accurately so that they can focus on more complex letter strings and topic words.

Throughout the school children are grouped according to ability, therefore there are a number of different spelling groups in each class. Some words may be common to more than one group. We encourage the children to use the 'Look, Cover, Write, Check' method to learn spellings.

In years 1 and 2 children have a spelling book to record weekly spellings. From Y3 – Y6 spellings are taken from a scheme of work and will be sent home on paper. It is important that children return their spelling book or the paper list to school before their weekly spelling test*. (see homework schedule in appendix 1)*

Maths

Children in Reception and Year 1 may be given some tasks to support or extend classroom work in maths. E.g. counting groups of objects, adding and subtracting amounts, collecting weight labels off cans, finding different length ribbons or string are possible activities.

From Year 1 children are expected to learn times tables. Each year group has a given set of tables to learn and practice in order to develop mathematical fluency and accuracy.

By the end of year 4 children are expected to be able to recall all multiplication facts and number bonds without delay.

Children in key stage two may be given more formal tasks in addition to learning or revising their tables. By Years 5 and 6 there will be more challenging tasks, such as investigations, problem to solve.

We have prepared a leaflet called 'Helping your child with maths' to help parents to support their children with maths homework. This can be found on the school website by clicking the school information folder. Hard copies are available from the school office.

Learning Logs

From year 1 all children will be given a set of homework tasks in a 'Learning Log'. Once a term they will be given a set of activities to complete. They are encouraged to be as creative as possible in how they present their work. Children will be expected to complete at least 3 but may do more if time permits. Tasks may be related to any area of the curriculum and will be selected to enthuse, enjoy and engage pupils with their learning

Preparation for topic work could involve a variety of tasks including the bringing in of useful objects for display, filling in a questionnaire, conducting a survey, preparing an illustration, posters, 3Dimensional structures etc. We strongly recommend that children join the Public Library. Older children, particularly those in Years 5 and 6, will gradually be given more demanding work. This may include pupils:

- finding out information;
- reading in preparation for lessons;
- preparing oral presentations;
- SATS type papers and questions;

Feedback for pupils, parents or carers and teachers

It is important that feedback about homework is given to children as quickly as possible. This may be given in a number of ways:

- immediately by parents or carers;
- discussion in class where homework is a part of the class work;
- individual comment from teacher;
- verbal feedback to children by the teacher; (vf on the work will indicate that this has happened)
- achievement slips sent home to acknowledge effort
- pupils reviewing the work done in small groups; and
- presentation of homework in class and school assemblies

Feedback from Parents/Carers

Teachers are always interested to know how children carried out activities, whether they were too hard/ too easy/ interesting etc. The homework diary/ reading record book is an ideal place for parents, carers and teachers to record any comments. Parents of children from years 1-6 may also write a comment in learning logs. Parents are also encouraged to comment on whether the time allocation was appropriate or whether the activity was too short/ too long. As with all school activities, parents are invited to discuss any queries or concerns with the class teacher in the first instance.

Non-Completion of homework

All children are expected to complete their homework and hand it to their teacher by the deadline set. Homework timetables are sent to parents at the start of the school year and reminders of the expectations are included in half-term forecasts which are sent to parents before the start of each half term.

When homework is not completed a reminder slip will be sent home to give children another chance to complete the task. If homework is not being regularly completed over the half term period the teacher will contact parents to discuss the reasons. If the problem continues parents will be invited to speak to the class teacher and work will be completed over breaks or lunchtime periods.

Guidance for teachers

- Homework should be purposeful and normally linked to classwork – e.g. preparation, consolidation or an opportunity to demonstrate application of previous learning at a distance from the teaching input.
- Instructions and expectations should be dated and pasted into learning log at the start of each term. This should provide clear guidance /expectations to children /parents for each piece of work. Where the task is practical the instructions/guidance should still be pasted into learning logs to support parents and to provide a record of homework given.
- Homework should be sent home each half term and weekly for spellings, tables and reading in accordance with the agreed schedule (appendix 1)

Appendix One Guidance to help Parents/Carers

The following guidance has been provided as suggestions to enable parents /carers to help their children with the school's spelling, reading and maths schemes:

'Look Cover Write and Check'

To help your child to memorise spellings, please encourage them to use scrap paper which can be folded:

1. Look carefully at the work for a few seconds
2. Fold the paper until it covers the word and try to write the complete word from memory
3. Open the paper and look again at the work to check if there are any mistakes
4. If mistakes have been made, look carefully and try to remember
5. Cover the word again and try again

This process should be repeated for each word until the child is able to write each word without mistakes.

Helping children to improve their reading

This guidance comes from the Primary Curriculum.

- *Provide a place to curl up with a book if possible.*
- *Share a read: take turns to read and listen*
- *Buy or borrow books they'll want to read.*
- *Join a library*
- *Talk to them about the books they are reading.*
- *If they get stuck, don't jump in too quickly - but help them to work it out for themselves.*
- *Let them see you reading, so that when you tell them how valuable and important reading is, they will believe you.*
- *Provide a good dictionary.*

A few hints to help you to help your children to improve their maths:

- Switch off the TV and use the TV guide or pull out supplements to see how long until a really interesting programme is on.
- Avoid phrases like 'I was never any good either! '
- Count and connect or match in everyday situations such as counting cutlery 1-Mum, 2-Dad, 3-Sarah, 4-David. Count going up/down stairs, doing up buttons, and the number of letters that arrive.
- Give (or pretend to!) a small amount of money - what can you buy for 10p, 20p, 50p, £1? and so on.
- What offers are there? Is 50% more at £1.20 better value than the usual price?
- Talk about growth - measure everyone. How much taller or shorter is Sarah than David, Mum than Dad and so on. Use centimeters and meters. Do the same with kilograms. Use the amounts printed on cans and packets with which to start.
- Programme the DVD/video. Which day? Channel? Time? How long for?
- Is there enough soup for 3 people, how much will they get, where do you think it will come to in the bowl?
- Milk for 20 cups of tea in a pint (note imperial measure still in use) - how could we find out without wasting milk?
- Card games, dominoes and dice are also very helpful. Matching the same number cards, playing snap, and so on. Can you make a track so all ends of dominoes match? Can you make a track so ends add up to 6? Can you use them all? Can you make a square so ends match? How big/small can you make the square?
- Dice with traditional Ludo, Snakes and Ladders games are good but count out loud - say 4 plus 6 comes to 10. Throw a dice 3 times - total score. Other players do the same and total the scores.
- Times tables practice as often as you are able.

Appendix Two: Homework Schedule

Reception Classes

Home activity	Suggested Time	10-15 minutes
A maximum of 10-15 minutes per day should be spent on the home activities. Children will be given sounds to learn and reading weekly. As the year progresses, children may also be given Curriculum activities from time to time. Children may be asked to look for objects to contribute to topic tables.		

Year 1

Home activity	Suggested Time	15 minutes
A maximum of 15 minutes per day should be spent on the home activities. Children will be given reading and spellings weekly and Curriculum activities termly. Children may be asked to look for objects to contribute to topic tables.		

Year 2

Home activity	Suggested Time	15-20 minutes
A maximum of 15 - 20 minutes per day should be spent on the home activities. Children will be given reading, tables and spellings weekly and Curriculum activities termly. Children may be asked to look for objects to contribute to topic tables.		

KS2

Year 3

Home activity	Suggested Time	20 mins
A maximum of 20 minutes per day should be spent on the home activities. Children will be given reading, tables and spellings weekly and Curriculum activities termly. Children may be asked to look for objects to contribute to topic tables.		

Year 4

Home activity	Suggested Time	20 mins
A maximum of 20 minutes per day should be spent on the home activities. Children will be given reading, tables and spellings weekly and Curriculum activities termly. Children may be asked to look for objects to contribute to topic tables.		

Year 5

Home activity	Suggested Time	20 -25 mins
A maximum of 25 minutes per day should be spent on the home activities. Children will be given reading, tables and spellings weekly and Curriculum activities termly. Children may be asked to contribute to topic tables with resources they have found or made.		

Year 6

Home activity	Suggested Time	25-30 mins
A maximum of 30 minutes per day should be spent on the home activities. Children will be given reading, tables and spellings weekly and Curriculum activities termly. Children may be asked to practice for SATs test with practice questions and papers.		