

Wormley Primary School Policy
Wormley Cof E Primary School
Home Learning Policy

Home Learning

Wormley C of E Primary School through consultation with staff, children and parents have devised a policy for home learning. Traditionally, this would be referred to as Homework but since we discuss *learning* with children much more than *work* we have changed the name of learning that takes place at home.

How much home learning should children be completing each night?

The amount of home learning that a child should be doing divides parents usually to two ends of a spectrum. Having had discussions with many parents about this it is clear that there are parents who want their children to have lots of home learning activities and there are others who do not agree with children being set home learning activities at all. As a school, we must find a happy medium.

Children are already in school for only two hours less than a typical adult's working day. They need time to relax, unwind, play, daydream and reflect – this is when they internalise learning. There is much evidence by researchers¹ to show that home learning makes no significant difference to a child's progress unless the activity is planned specifically to meet an individual's needs and the individual receives personal feedback. This has shaped our thinking about home learning activities.

Expectations

Generally, the amount of home learning a child will be expected to do will increase as they travel through year groups. By the time they reach Y6 we are aiming to prepare them for secondary school where there is an expectation that each subject teacher will set homework at least once a week. Each piece of homework will take in the region of half an hour.

The teachers in each year group will decide on the priorities for home learning for their children. There is an expectation that children complete home learning that has been set. If this is causing difficulties at home, please come in and speak to the class teacher, as learning is an emotional experience and the ability to learn is affected by the emotional state. Stress is learning's nemesis. We offer a Home Learning Club at lunchtime for KS2 who need to complete their home learning.

In addition to home learning set, the school has also invested in learning platforms – MyMaths and Bug Club – in order to offer extension activities to be used as freely as desired.

Typical Home Learning Activities

Through discussions with staff, we have decided that there are some activities that we want to encourage children to do at home which will be of benefit to all children:

Reading

There is nothing more valuable than the time spent between a child and an adult reading a book together and discussing what they have read. Reading is a skill that needs to be practised on a regular basis (daily) and with an adult. The ability to read fluently, confidently and with understanding will underpin all of a child's future learning. Discussion of themes that arise in stories, poems or articles etc. can easily stimulate discussion and wider learning.

Handwriting

Children need to be able to express themselves clearly and accurately in writing, and since children are required to answer almost all exams in writing, they should practise. Handwriting is a skill that needs regular, short practise (daily). Cursive handwriting is taught and practised in school but all children would benefit by practising daily at home.

¹ John Hattie

Mathematical Concepts

In order to teach a child how to tell the **time**, the experience needs to be real. Parents should randomly ask their child to tell the time, work out how many minutes to the next hour, how many minutes since tea etc. This constant practise will develop the child's ability to tell the time. This is best learned at home.

In order to understand the concept of **money** children need to experience the purpose for money. They need to have money to save, spend, play shops etc. This is an activity best learned at home in real situations.

Measures are another set of activities which children need to experience at home. If they use scales to measure weight whilst cooking, the activity is purposeful. As you drive along in the car, counting the kilometres travelled, this will enable a child to appreciate this measure of distance, which is very hard to teach in the classroom.

Fluency with **Times Tables** underpin all learning in Mathematics and require some rote learning - alongside experimenting and understanding – practising again and again. This could be learned in a fun way using CDs and songs.

Topic Home Learning Grids

The children mostly enjoy this type of home learning, where they have a choice and a range of activities – written, research, art and craft, drama and song writing etc. which appeal to their interests and strengths.

Many of these activities require collaboration between peers and other members of the family and this is particularly important since it is recognised that parental involvement in a child's school learning is a key indicator of academic success.²

Spelling

Research and teacher experience shows that even when a child learns their weekly spellings and achieves top marks in a spelling test, they will not go on to apply this in their general writing since they will be using a different part of the brain's function³.

However, we do think that the children will benefit from practising the most common words as they will come across them constantly in everyday language. The school also sets spelling patterns to learn as when we learn a pattern and a rule, we can then apply it when faced with unfamiliar words which is more beneficial than learning independent words at random.

Spelling grid activities are sent home to suggest activities that support the learning of spelling rules.

Responses to Home Learning

All home reading should be recorded in the children's Reading Record. Staff, families and children contribute to this record together. Teachers regularly monitor these.

All home learning is evaluated by the teacher, through oral and written feedback. Children are encouraged to share their home learning with their peers in class and throughout the school.

This policy will be reviewed regularly to take into account the views of staff, parents and children.

²Beadle

³ Charles DesForges