



Home Learning Policy

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“Home learning” refers to any work or activities which pupils are asked to do outside lesson time, either independently or with support from parents / carers.

The role of parents / carers in their children’s education has long been recognised as a significant factor in educational success and school improvement (Epstein, 1996, EEF/ Sutton Trust 2012).

Research clearly documents that when parents / carers actively participate in their children's education, achievement increases and attitude improves.

We have high expectations from the children at Cliffe VC Primary School and feel that partnership with parents / carers over home learning is key to our success. We also believe that home learning should be fun and purposeful rather than a chore. Research indicates that home learning is less valuable when it becomes viewed as merely obligatory rather than engaging. We feel that children should still have plenty of time after school to play and take part in other activities, or simply relax with family.

The purposes of home learning

- Consolidates and reinforces skills and understanding
- Exploits resources for learning, of all kinds, at home
- Encourages children, as they get older, to develop the self- confidence and discipline needed to study on their own.
- Enables an effective partnership between home and school.

For young children very short activities of different kinds provide an important opportunity to talk about what they are learning to an interested adult and to practise key skills in a supportive environment. It is the involvement of parents and carers in joint activities which is most valuable in promoting children’s learning. As children get older, home learning provides an opportunity for children to develop the skills of independent learning and this should increasingly become its main purpose. However, children are not expected to work in isolation and will always need the support and encouragement of an interested adult.

Many of the activities you already undertake at home as part of your daily routine are invaluable learning opportunities for children and these should not be underestimated;

- Talking: The language children use is the language they hear around them. Talk, discuss, question and encourage listening. These are some of the key skills children need to thrive.
- Reading: Talk about books; read to your child; listen to your child read; visit the library; visit bookshops to browse, not just to buy.
- Research: Find information for school topics and personal hobbies, look up recipes, read the news, check the weather. Taking time to pursue such interest helps develop an inquisitive mind.
- Play games: Taking turns, playing fairly, learning to lose, reading rules, helping a younger sibling, practising rules of Mathematics - adding/ subtracting scores, applying multiplication tables, using logical tactics, concentration - just some of the many skills involved in a game.
- Go outdoors: Physical, outdoor activity is good for both physical and mental health, It also provides invaluable opportunities to look, listen, experience and ask questions about the world around us.
- Clubs: Children need to develop socially and culturally, and activities such as swimming, football, riding, Cubs, Brownies, etc. play a major part in development.

In addition to all of these enriching activities, as a school we set some additional expectations around what pupils should also be undertaking at home to support their future success. These expectations differ with the age of pupils, though should always remain achievable and not place an overwhelming burden upon pupil or family.

Our expectations

Reading

Regular reading is vital and should be a daily activity for all children. For young children this may mean that the parent does the reading and the child talks about the story and the pictures. Please do not feel that this needs to be restricted to the book your child brings home from school. There are many opportunities to develop reading skills within the home – reading online information, looking at maps, looking at non-fiction topics of interest or the many books that children have in their bedrooms but don't always have time to read. We would also strongly advocate regular visits to the local library. Such visits allow children to access a wide variety of new texts and also opportunity for you to discuss literature together.

In addition, we would also encourage all pupils, even those further up school, to continue to regularly read to an adult and have an adult read to them. Whilst our pupils are obviously still learning to read there is also great opportunity to 'read to learn'. Reading together with an adult allows great opportunity to discuss the content of texts and develop our skills of comprehension.

The length of time that children are expected to spend on home learning may vary and increases as children get older.

Maths

Our Maths home learning is in the form of Doodle Maths, the award-winning home learning programme. All children have a log in at the back of their Home-School journals.

Why Doodle? Using Doodle for just 10 minutes a day is proven to help children make three months of progress in just one month. In addition, the clever algorithm powering Doodle builds every child a personalised work programme tailored to their strengths and weaknesses. As it's designed for children to use independently, it's an educational activity which children can enjoy without adult input, building motivation and independence from key stage 1. Moreover, it's fun and engaging, with educational games, motivational collectables, and nationwide challenges to take part in.

Parents can also view their child's progress by visiting parents.doodlemaths.com or downloading the free DoodleConnect app on Apple and Android devices.

Home Learning Across the School

Reception

In the early years we do not expect children to do extensive formal home learning. However, we hope that parents / carers will spend time with their children playing games, talking about books and about what they have been doing at school. We will send home phonic sounds to rehearse, and children will bring home books to read and games to play. On occasion we may set specific, practical tasks to be enjoyed at home, 'build a bug house' etc. In addition, pupils have access to the 'Doodle Maths' website and many enjoy the interactive games this offers, all while developing their basic mathematical skills. Home learning should be fun and we do not expect tired children to sit still and work every night after a long day at school. Reading with a parent is very important as long as it is encouraging the child to love books and the desire to read. We hope that every child will experience a story every day – bedtime stories are the best way of promoting a love of books and enriching language. Remember, online / screen based options do exist but they are no substitute for the real thing !

KS1

In Years 1 and 2 we would expect children to spend approximately 1 hour on home learning spread over the week, predominantly reading.

Reading is a key daily activity and every child should spend 10 or 15 minutes reading time or sharing a book with an adult every day. Phonics should also be rehearsed regularly.

In addition, we expect pupils to spend a short, regular slots of time working on Doodle maths. The aim each week being to 'stay in yellow zone but aim for green zone'.

In Year 1 pupils will generally be set an additional phonics or maths to complete via Doodle Maths and/or Doodle Spell.

In Year 2, pupils will generally be set an additional spelling or phonics task to complete via Doodle Spell.

KS2

Children will be expected to be more independent in their home learning and take responsibility for completing the tasks and submitting the work on time.

Reading remains a key daily activity for all children. Even though children may be confident and fluent readers it is important to develop comprehension skills. Reading with an adult, and listening to an adult model reading, is important to ensure that these higher order reading skills are practised and more demanding texts are accessible and understood by the child.

In addition we expect pupils to spend a short, regular slots of time working on Doodle maths. The aim each week being to 'stay in yellow zone but aim for green zone'. In Year 6 there is also an expectation that all pupils will be in the 'green zone' on Doodle English.

In Year 3, pupils will generally be set an additional spellings/writing task to complete via Doodle Spell.

In Year 4 and 5, expectations are that the children read a minimum of three times a week at home. There will also be weekly spelling tasks on Doodle Spell.

In Year 6 - Reading expectations are more formal, with a minimum expectation of 3 times a week, with this being written up in their journal. There will also be weekly spelling tasks on Doodle Spell.

For all years:

We expect the same high standards of presentation for home learning as in other areas of school work.

If they are required to record/write children should use a pencil or blue/black ink (as directed by the teacher) in the home learning book or sheet provided or plain A4 paper.

Other considerations

Children of all ages will not be expected to spend more than half an hour on any activity at any one time.

If a child has difficulty with the home learning it should be stopped after 20 minutes and the difficulty reported back to the teacher.

Home learning should not become a problem for children or families and parents / carers should inform us of any difficulties as soon as they arise.

Home learning will not be set to cover work that has been missed while a child has been on holiday etc. Children who are absent from school through illness will not be expected to complete home learning.

National guidance stipulates that home learning should not place heavy demands on class teachers in either preparation or marking. Teachers will set activities for the class or groups but not individuals, except in specific cases. Teachers will give feedback to the child on all home learning, this may be verbal feedback or written marking.

Teachers will ensure that sufficient time is given to enable every child to complete the task, taking into account the fact that parents / carers vary in the time they have available to support home learning. Where possible a regular pattern will be established to ensure predictability. Class teachers will inform families about weekly routines and expectations via the weekly newsletter.

Monitoring & Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored regularly by the Headteacher and the Governing Body. They will evaluate the impact of the policy through parental and pupil feedback, and the learning and progress of pupils throughout the school.