

Trusting in God; Growing in Wisdom



Home Learning Policy

“Teach me knowledge and good judgement, for I trust your commands”.

Psalm 119:66

Date: September 2021

Review Date: September 2024

School Vision

With thankful hearts, we trust in God as we grow in his love which shines through us. We aim to live our faith and grow in wisdom.

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go. (Joshua 1:9)

Teach me knowledge and good judgment, for I trust your commands. (Psalm 119:66)

Introduction

Our school works within the recommendations of The Equality Act 2010.

“We fail our children miserably if we assume that school can do everything.” John Abbott – President of C21st Learning Initiative

At Whitegate Primary School, we know that children are precious; we know the joy that they have for life should be an inspiration for all of us. We also know that it is our responsibility as parents and educators to “train our children up,” both in the ways of God (Proverbs 22:6) and also in their academic skills. We all want the best for our children and so that is why we aim to teach the children that “all hard work brings profit.” (Proverbs 14). Our approach to homework aims to teach children the value of working hard as the way to “live life to the full,” (John 10:10).

Rational and Aims

There is plentiful research that tells us that children who read regularly at home achieve significantly better outcomes throughout their lives. For this reason we emphasise reading above homework.

The National Curriculum 2014 (which is statutory), puts greater emphasis on children acquiring specific core knowledge (e.g. spelling and number facts) much earlier than previously. For this to be achieved within a broad and balanced school curriculum, some learning will need to be practised and memorised out of school.

We know that children learn most effectively where there is a successful partnership between parents and carers, the child’s first educators, and the school. When learning at home is linked to current programmes of work it informs parents about learning in school, enabling them to support their child effectively.

Homework must be a worthwhile part of learning, one that adds value to children’s education, enhancing their academic ability and success in class.

Effective home learning reinforces, challenges, enhances or enriches learning in school.

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Guidelines

Apart from Acorns (Reception) and Oak (Y6), homework is set through the VLE pages on the school website. This is in a consistent place so it is easy to find.

In Acorns and Oak, any information regarding homework can be found in the Home School Contact book. In all other classes, teachers will inform children and their parents about homework, including the days it is set and any hand in days on their class page on the school website. Children need to be logged on to School Spider to access their homework, unless it is a pre-printed sheet given out in class.

Teaching staff will not tell children off for not completing homework. However they will hold children to account if their learning is hampered by not having completed a piece of homework, particularly reading.

If a child is unable to complete the task within the five day period, teachers will provide time in the school day, at break or lunch for them to catch up.

Children need breaks, a time to 'be a child' and enjoy other aspects of life more fully than a busy school week can accommodate. Reading is the exception – reading should be taking place regularly in the home, including over weekends and holidays.

For those children who would benefit from completing home learning in school, an invitation will be offered to our Homework Club.

Teachers acknowledge home learning in a number of ways: through its inclusion and use in lessons, including it in children's topic or other books, awarding certificates for a really impressive effort or by the teacher marking it.

Most marking of homework is through the class work it has contributed to, usually with the marked piece being completed in class, using the home learning to enhance and raise the child's achievement.

Children who engage with and complete their homework will achieve higher standards in class than children who do not complete their homework. Late work will not be marked.

Children who learn an instrument are expected to practise daily.

Home learning is not set on a Friday for a Monday hand in; respecting weekends as precious family time.

Teachers do not set homework for one or two week breaks with the exception of Easter for Year 6 children preparing for SATS; however, we do expect the children to continue to read their own books during these times. In the Summer holiday we encourage all children to read widely and regularly by participating in the Library Reading Challenge.

The following table gives a guide to the time that should be spent on home learning.

Tasks presented in brown font require adult support. Tasks in blue should be done independently (although initially the children may need 'setting up' on computers/tablets for Numbots/TTRS and EducationCity).

	<u>READING</u>	<u>OTHER HOMEWORK</u>	<u>MUSIC</u> For those learning to play an instrument
Reception	5 – 10 minutes daily	Christian Value each half-term	
Key Stage One Y1 and Y2	10 minutes five times a week	Spellings (3 times a week) Numbots/TTRS (3 times a week) English or Maths (set on Education City) or Knowledge Organiser work each week (No longer than 10 minutes on each piece)	5-10 minutes daily
Lower Key Stage Two Y3 and Y4	10 – 15 minutes four times a week, with adult support, for those who are still on the reading scheme. 10 – 15 minutes four times a week for those who are 'free-readers'	Spellings (3 times a week) TTRS (3 times a week) English, Maths or Knowledge Organiser work each week (No longer than 15 minutes on each piece)	5-10 minutes daily
Y5	10 – 15 minutes four times a week, with adult support, for those who are still on the reading scheme. 15 – 20 minutes four times a week for those who are 'free-readers'	Spellings (3 times a week) TTRS (3 times a week) English, Maths or Knowledge Organiser work each week (No longer than 15 minutes on each piece)	10-20 minutes daily
Y6	15 – 20 minutes four times a week for those who are 'free-readers'	Practise personalised spellings Mental Maths twice a week SPaG once a week Occasional topic including, Knowledge Organiser work (No longer than 15 minutes on each piece)	10-20 minutes daily

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In the penultimate week of each half term, the homework set across the school, will be to complete an activity from the Home School Values sheet which is based on the Christian value that we have been focusing on in school that half-term.

If your child has worked hard and to the best of his/her ability but not completed a task, parents may make a note for the teacher in the home school book or reading record. We are happy to see that a child has done their best but that to finish would have taken too long. Of course children who wish to work for longer are most welcome!

READING AT HOME is the most important home learning a child can do: it is different from 'other homework'. It is expected that children will read over the holiday. When children read regularly, supported by an adult taking an interest in their reading alongside them, it will become a pleasure (for them and the adult too).

Children whose reading is not supported by adults at home do not make the same good progress as their peers. Reading impacts on children's achievement in all other subjects. If a parent must choose between other homework and reading with their child we ask that the reading always take priority. We expect children to read at home at weekends and during the holidays too. The overwhelming majority of children require adult interest and support throughout their primary years if they are to be independent and thrive at High School.

SPELLING: Children learn spellings as homework or in class, through direct teaching and children helping and testing each other on their individual spellings, identified by teachers through marking.

- All children are encouraged to learn spellings they are given using first phonic rules and patterns.
- There is a balance between children's individual spelling lists (those that the teacher has corrected) and those that children are currently learning patterns and rules for in their spelling learning in class and subject specific and topic words.
- There are prescribed spellings for each year group. Learning these spellings is not optional.

MATHEMATICS: Home learning includes: reinforcement, challenge or enrichment work to support their Mathematical development. Work can be set on Education City which gives the children feedback and is more playful and enjoyable than other work.

OTHER HOME LEARNING: Other homework set from time to time, can cover all areas of the curriculum. These activities would be instead of the weekly Maths and/or English. This can include physical, creative (art and music), historical, scientific, geographical or personal and social learning. Teachers may occasionally set a craft or making activity for home learning. However as these activities can be time consuming we limit the amount of times these are set.

Optional home learning includes activities initiated by parents and carers as well as those initiated by teachers. Games such as Snakes and Ladders, Monopoly etc. are all excellent for developing mathematical learning, alongside taking turns and being a good sport.

Some home learning which has not been set by a teacher but initiated by a child or group of friends, can be brought into school and shared with the class. This is acknowledged and appreciated too: through verbal praise, stars or certificates.

USE OF COMPUTERS FOR HOMEWORK: Teachers will ensure that internet research can be achieved via the VLE on websites we have recommended. Some children like to use the Internet for research. This requires careful guidance by parents and carers in the home and parents may refer to the e-safety guidance on our Website. Vast quantities of printing from websites does not constitute research, children should read relevant information and make sense of it themselves, perhaps through producing a mind map or notes making a reference to the websites they have used. This is a very important and key skill in our technological age where we have enormous amounts of information to handle.

Children are not expected to produce home learning work on a computer, although they may choose to do so. Children without computers at home and wishing to use them for homework can use school laptops in school and at lunchtime. We are not permitted to put external memory sticks into school computers so presentations etc. should be printed off or uploaded onto the VLE.

Equal Opportunities Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities [SEND]: Children with SEND will be set homework which best supports their needs. This may be the same as the class, differentiated activities, a different task or activity or a combination of these. The homework may link to classwork or on occasion, link to targets on their Termly Learning Goals. This individualised homework is integral to consolidating and embedding their learning in class and the plan to support them in narrowing the gap with their peers and reaching their potential. We are flexible in how the home learning tasks are completed and discussions around this with the class teacher are important in getting the home learning support right.

Transition to High School

‘High School ready’ is a popular term being used by government currently. Children in Year 5 and 6 do have a greater amount of homework set at various intervals and are expected to be increasingly independent in managing their workload. They need to keep their skills sharp to ensure they can access the secondary curriculum at the same pace as their peers. Children in Year 6 also need to get used to the demands of High School with regard to homework and taking more individual responsibility for their learning. Home learning in Year 6 is largely expected and only very occasionally optional. Nevertheless, being a child in Year 6 is its own unique stage, getting children ‘ready for Year 7’ while important is not the only purpose of primary school which is to make children ‘life-ready’ and for that they need to develop resilient, strong and considerate characters alongside their curiosity about the world, their interest in and love of learning.

Date of Policy: September 2021

PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR POLICY:	CAROLINE MACKENZIE
APPROVED:	FGBM 23.03.22
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