

Homework guide

I learn at school...



...and at home, too!

Reading	Number fluency	Spellings
<p>Daily - at least 10-15 minutes We expect children to read daily; this should be a minimum of 10-15 minutes and can include books, comics, websites – any reading material.</p> <p>Look out for the focus or challenge prompt on your child's homework sheet which they take home.</p> <p>Parents/carers: please comment in your child's Reading Record at least once a week.</p>	<p>Daily - about 10 minutes Number fluency is about knowing number facts, like number bonds to ten (eg 3+7 and 4+6), and not having to work everything out (eg by using fingers).</p> <p>From Y2, it includes having rapid recall of multiplication facts (and corresponding division facts). By the end of Y4, pupils should know their times tables up to 12x12.</p> <p>Look out for the focus on the homework sheet we send home.</p> <p>Using NumBots and TimesTables Rock Stars will support fluency.</p>	<p>Daily - at least 5-10 minutes On the homework sheet we send home, we provide a list of words to learn in preparation for a test on the following Friday. In Key Stage 1, the list is weekly. In Key Stage 2, the list is each half-term.</p> <p>We expect children to practise spellings little and often.</p>
<p>Top Tips: <i>Read aloud with your child, even if they're older – check out ten top tips. During this time, discuss the text. For example, ask questions about the characters in a book, the layout of a factual book and the views of a website or magazine.</i></p>	<p>Top Tips: <i>Work with the child by exploring different strategies and top tips. Practice in the car, walking to school etc all helps. Chanting forwards, backwards and alternating as you count through can all help, as can internet games. Using NumBots and TimesTables Rock Stars will help – maybe ten minutes every day to limit screen time.</i></p>	<p>Top Tips: <i>Your child could use the words in written sentences or stories (to also practise handwriting and punctuation) and in conversations (speaking and listening for the words). Do a 'mini-test' on some of the spellings. Check out our Super Spelling Strategies guide – go to the Learn More page of the website and then Help Your Child.</i></p>
Talk Time	Living and Learning	...and
<p>Weekly - about 10-20 minutes Each week, we provide a whole-school prompt for Talk Time at home. The prompt relates to learning going on in school.</p> <p>It's an opportunity to engage in a discussion with other people at home (or even electronically eg via Zoom).</p> <p>The topics discussed will sometimes be returned to in school, so your child can share their views with a wider group.</p>	<p>Weekly - about 10-20 minutes 'Living and Learning' is our name for PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic education). We believe that the learning in this area is so important that you'll want to support your child at home, too.</p> <p>Each week, we have a new Living and Learning statement – the theme for the week. We let you know this on the school calendar – check out the activity to enhance the learning at the same time.</p>	<p>Occasional In Class News on the websites, teachers frequently add some details about how you should support at home.</p> <p>The suggestions are practical and purposeful, meeting our curriculum intent to be enjoyable, relevant, inspiring and creative.</p>
<p>Top Tips: <i>Turn the telly off! Sit around the dining table! This is a whole-school home learning task, so everyone can join in for a sustained discussion. Use ambitious words, useful phrases and interesting sentences. Ask questions to develop the conversation and challenge your child to engage even more.</i></p>	<p>Top Tips: <i>Don't neglect this – the learning is too important to ignore. Covering things such as manners, mental wellbeing and online safety, our Living and Learning statements act as prompts to help you support your child in ways that go beyond the purely academic. Find the statements in our website's calendar (in the Find Out section).</i></p>	<p>Top Tips: <i>Look out for ideas to support your child's learning when you read the class news on the school website – the class news is in the Learn More section. Keep the learning fun and practical.</i></p>

Homework policy

Date: September 2023

Definition

Homework is anything children do outside the normal school day, in response to school guidance, encouragement or prompt, which contributes to their learning.

Aims and principles

We value homework for our children in order to:

- enable them to make progress in their academic and social development
- develop skills as independent learners
- consolidate and reinforce learning in school
- promote engagement at home
- promote cooperation between home and school in supporting learning
- help children develop good work habits, increasing their chances of future economic well-being
- enable aspects of the curriculum to be explored and enriched
- celebrate diversity and explore issues around SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development)
- act as prompts for parents and carers to support their child's development

Learning in school is limited. Children benefit from wider, complementary experiences out of school. However, some prompts and guidance from school can direct these experiences and develop greater learning. In addition, homework helps children to acquire the skill of independent learning.

Whilst homework develops children's learning and independence, quality family time, play and free time are also important. Homework does not prevent children from taking part in wider activities such as those offered by after-school clubs and other organisations. Children develop their interests and skills to the full only when parents/carers encourage them to make maximum use of the opportunities available outside school.

In Sphere Federation, we refer to educational research. Research indicates that homework can provide some impact on improving outcomes. Schools whose pupils do homework tend to be more successful, although this may not be a causal relationship. Research (see [Education Endowment Foundation's Teaching and Learning Toolkit](#)) indicates the following points, around which our policy is based:

- effective homework is associated with greater parental involvement and support
- the broader evidence base suggests that short focused tasks or activities which relate directly to what is being taught, and which are built upon in school, are likely to be more effective than regular daily homework
- parental engagement can have a positive impact on learning
- oral language activities can have a very positive impact on learning: spoken language and verbal interaction is important

The purpose of Talk Time is to encourage a conversation around children's current learning. We want our children to be expert talkers, using a variety of sentences and expressions, and able to back up their points or disagree with others in a polite way. Talk Time helps writing, too: if you're a good speaker, it's likely you can be a good writer.

Activities

The home learning activities we expect are set out in the Homework Guide.

We provide a **weekly paper copy** of the tasks and details are published on our websites' Homework page, too.

We also provide a **home learning book**. This is for use at home: children use this to practise spellings or number facts and possibly to make notes during your Talk Time discussion at home. It isn't brought to school each week.

We believe the frequency of homework set out in the Homework Guide provides the right balance for pupils and meets the expectations of most parents.

Staff may occasionally provide additional homework. This will amount to two or three extra pieces across the year. As an addition, staff are happy to suggest to parents / carers other ways they can support their child's learning at home. Occasionally, there will be exceptions to the daily and weekly routines eg during the Y6 residential trip; towards the end of a busy term.

Very occasionally, and through consultation with a Head of School, a teacher may decide the Homework activities set out in this policy and the Homework Guide may not be the most effective provision to meet the needs of a particular individual, group or class. Alternative homework activities will be set instead; this includes weekly worksheet activities and longer-term projects. If alternative homework activities are set, we will communicate this to parents / carers.

If a child gets low scores in times tables tests or spelling tests for a series of weeks, the class teacher will alert parents/carers and consider next steps.

Role of parents/carers

Parents/carers play a vital role in their child's education, including homework. They should help by encouraging and discussing ideas and by ensuring their child has a good working space at home. Parents/carers should contact the class teacher or Head of School with questions or concerns. The role of parents/carers is set out in the Homework Guide.

Teachers contact parents if they identify that not enough home learning is taking place eg if they notice a child's Reading Record is not being completed or data shows a child is not practising numbers facts using Using NumBots / TimesTables Rock Stars. This links with our Feedback Policy.

Parents/carers might wish to supplement the activities we provide with additional materials.

Holidays

There is no Talk Time or Spellings homework during holiday periods.

We do not authorise unnecessary term-time absence. Because of this, extra homework will not be given to children whose families are going on a term-time holiday. Where a term-time absence is necessary and unavoidable, staff encourage parents to do extra reading and practise / revise spellings, tables, handwriting etc; staff also refer families to the school website where additional ideas and activities are described to support their child's learning, or to alternative, appropriate websites.

Social, moral, spiritual, cultural development

We aim to promote SMSC in homework; sometimes, this is by directly addressing SMSC development in specific weeks eg: 'I can talk about moral choices', 'I know what democracy is' or 'I can respond to some art' (provided the art work is included so people at home can join in).

Inclusion and equal opportunities

We set homework for all children as a normal part of school life. We ensure that the tasks set are appropriate to the child. Homework requirements set out in the policy may, very occasionally, be adapted on an individual basis. For example, due to some specific SEND issue: teachers differentiate spelling lists or expectations around the amount to learn in order to cater for this.

We value and celebrate the diversity of our pupils and their families and we appreciate the enrichment that this brings. Often, homework tasks can encompass this diversity. This supports SMSC.

Appendix: homework template

Date

Our whole-school homework this week is:

Reading	Number Fact Fluency
Please make sure your child is reading on a daily basis.	Use NumBots or Times Table Rock Stars in regular short bursts.
This week's focus or challenge:	This week's focus:
Talk Time	
Living and Learning	
Each week's Living and Learning statement features in the school calendar – check out the prompt to support you and your child in this area. Find the statements in the calendar – you'll see it in the Find Out section of our website.	
Spellings	

