

Appleby Primary School



Homework Policy

September 2019

Approved by Staff:

Approved by Governors:

To be Reviewed: ...September 2022

Appleby Primary School is an inclusive community where together we empower creative minds and inspire a love of learning.

This policy is designed to reflect and support this ethos by helping to raise the aspirations and achievements of all pupils and to promote communication and mutual understanding between children, staff, parents and carers.

Introduction

Homework, or learning activities at home, can make an important contribution to children's progress in school, and well planned and organised homework plays an important part in raising standards of achievement by pupils of all ages. Research by the Education Endowment Foundation has shown that homework can increase pupil progress by some two additional months. Homework provides an opportunity for reinforcement, consolidation and application of learning, as well as giving chances to extend and enrich this at home. To be effective, expectations need to be clear, shared and understood.

Whole School Policy for Homework

Through this policy we aim to:

- ensure consistency of approach throughout the school
- ensure progression towards independence and individual responsibility
- ensure the needs of the individual child are taken into account
- ensure parents /guardians have a clear understanding about expectations from themselves and the pupil
- extend and support the learning experience via reinforcement and revision
- provide opportunities for parents and pupils to work together to enjoy learning experiences
- provide opportunities for parents, pupils and school to work in partnership
- encourage children to develop long term strategies for future needs
- prepare children in Year 6 for Secondary transfer

The Purpose of Homework

At Appleby Primary School we regard the purpose of Homework as:

- **encouraging** pupils to develop the skills, confidence and motivation to study effectively on their own.
- **consolidating and reinforcing** the skills, knowledge and understanding developed at school, particularly in English and Mathematics- difficult new concepts should not be introduced for homework without prior explanation or preparation with the children
- **extending** school learning, for example through additional reading.
- **developing an effective partnership** between the school and parents/carers in pursuing the aims of the school.

As children progress through the school, homework provides an opportunity to develop the skills of independent learning, and this increasingly becomes its main purpose. It is important that children should gradually get into a habit of "home study time". When children reach Year 6 their homework programme will cover a wider range of tasks and curriculum content, with a regular weekly schedule.

Types of Homework

As they progress through school, children will be expected to complete a balance of regular daily activities which stay the same each week, specific tasks to support learning in curriculum subjects. The recommended amount of time allocated to homework each week understandably increases as children progress the school.

Reading

Regular reading by children to and with their parents/carers is vital, and is the foundation to further progress. We encourage **all children** to read to their parents/carers or for parents/carers to read to their children **daily**. An overwhelming range of research makes clear links between children reading in early life and academic success. Reading develops vocabulary, enhances concentration, develops language skills and fosters a thirst for knowledge. Before children are able to read independently, time spent reading to your child will set them up to succeed.

Each child will bring home a reading journal which we ask parents to sign to record that reading at home has taken place.

Spelling

Children from Year 1 to Year 6 will participate in a weekly spelling test. They will bring home a spelling list each week and should practice their spellings regularly using a “look, copy, cover, write, check” strategy (see appendix).

Times tables

Children from Year 1 to Year 6 will have a weekly times tables test. In order to prepare for this, and to develop their rapid recall of number facts, children should practice their times tables for a few minutes each day.

Focussed Activity

Education Endowment Foundation research states that **“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.”**

From Year 2 children will be provided with a focussed activity or activities to complete at home. The focus homework and home activities will be on English and Mathematics though other subject areas may be added to the programme from time to time. This focussed activity will have a recommended completion time (see table below) dependent on your child’s age. The activity will revisit and revise work recently completed in class and support is available from your child’s class teacher should this be necessary.

Additional Study

At Appleby Primary School we encourage parents, carers and families to play an active role in their child’s education and we recognise that many parents enjoy the opportunity to support their child’s learning at home.

At the start of each term, class teachers will share with parents the curriculum focus and learning due to take place in the coming weeks. As part of this, suggestions will be made for private study, visits to museums or days out that can support families’ participation in their child’s learning.

Teachers will be celebrate and recognise additional study items or photographs brought into class by sharing them with the class or adding work to a class display or homework folder.

Additional Study activities may include:

- Suggested places to visit to support learning across the curriculum such as museums, places of interest or special events
- Visit the library to find and read books on a curriculum theme
- Complete online learning activities set by the teacher using Purple Mash or Socrative to support learning in a particular subject area
- Interview a friend or relative on a subject linked to a particular theme studied in class
- Bring along artefacts or photographs to compile a class museum or display
- Information gathering or research activity
- Revision for end of key stage tests
- Prepare a book review

Additional study activities will include a balance of formal and practical, interactive learning opportunities and should provide opportunities for parents and carers to become involved to make learning activities meaningful, rewarding and fun.

Use of Technology

There is a growing potential to the use of ICT in support of homework. While teachers need to be aware that not all children may have internet access, the school website can be used as a stepping stone to activities designed by the school, or to provide links to safe and selected websites to further research. Children should be reminded at all times of the school's policy for safe use of the Internet.

Special Educational Needs

Staff will ensure that they set the appropriate type and amount of homework for children with Special Educational Needs. Sometimes children with specific learning difficulties can benefit from special tasks separate from the homework set for other children in the class. However, it is important that they should do as much in common with the other children as possible. Setting appropriate homework, which demands neither too much nor too little of the children, needs close co-ordination between class teacher, Special Needs co-ordinator and parents. Tasks should be little and often and give:

- a very clear focus and time guideline.
- plenty of opportunities for the pupil to succeed.
- help in developing social as well as other skills, where necessary.
- variety – not purely written assignments.

Planning and Co-ordinating Homework

Class Teachers are responsible for the setting of homework. There are planned patterns of homework, with English and Maths Activities given each week. This familiar routine will be helpful for children, parents and teachers.

Teachers will allow a reasonable period within which homework is to be completed, for example to allow sufficient time for information to be collected or to take account of any after school activities

the children may take part in. Teaching staff will ensure that the demands placed on pupils are monitored, ensuring that the workload is not excessive.

Teachers will maintain an accurate and up to date register of homework assignments set and responses received. Parents need to be contacted if and when problems arise with the return of assignments.

If children fail to produce homework after a reasonable period of time has lapsed and appropriate reminders have been given, they may be asked to complete the homework assignment within school hours, eg at playtime. Persistent failure to produce homework may result in contact with parents and further sanctions in school.

The Role of Parents and Carers

The school actively encourages parents/carers to help support their children in the completion of homework tasks, and would suggest the following as means by which this can be achieved:

- by regularly checking the Y5/6 Homework Diary or Y3/4 Book Bags for homework tasks and instructions
- by providing a reasonably peaceful, suitable place for doing homework
- by making it clear to their children that they value homework, and be supportive in explaining how this can help them make progress
- by expecting deadlines to be met and checking that they are
- by giving praise to their children for the completion of homework tasks

Teachers will publish information about homework such as the days that homework will be set and collected as well as expected weekly tasks and additional optional study activities on their class page of the school website. Parents therefore will be familiar with the weekly timetable and pattern of homework each week.

How long should homework take to complete?

At Appleby Primary School we believe that homework should be a short and regular period of home study to revisit, rehearse and secure learning that takes place in the classroom. It is an opportunity for parents/carers to share in their child's learning and we positively encourage parents to play an active role both supporting younger children and fostering independence in their children as they progress through school.

Homework should not be an onerous activity and should promote enjoyment of learning. We recognise that from time to time all children may find activities challenging and require further input from their teacher. Overleaf is a timetable to provide guidance on the expected length of time to be spent on home learning activities. Should children have difficulty or require further teacher input, parents are encouraged to bring the activity to an end and contact the class teacher to allow additional support to be provided in school. This can be done either by a phone call via the office or a note in the child's home learning book.

Feedback for Pupils

Where homework is completed together with adults, children will receive immediate feedback on what they are doing. If children are working on their own it is important that they receive appropriate feedback from their class teacher, as soon as possible. This may be through written or verbal comments from the class teacher, or where appropriate through class work or tests, for example tables and spellings.

Recognition of children's efforts will also include the use of class rewards. Teachers are asked to recognise efforts and progress made within homework but are encouraged to mark homework more briefly than learning completed within school time.

Completed and marked homework will be kept in a child's home study folder in their class.

Homework Diaries and Reading Record Books are the means by which school and home are able to communicate on a weekly basis. Parents are fully encouraged to use this as a regular means of communication.

Appleby Primary School Homework Activities Timetable

	Guidance By Year Group			
	Foundation Stage (Nursery Reception)	Key Stage One (Yrs 1&2)	Lower Key Stage 2 (Yrs 3&4)	Upper Key Stage 2 (Yrs 5&6)
Reading	We encourage parents to read to their child regularly and often. When children have received a school reading book we would like them to read it to a parent/carer at least 5 times per week. Parent should sign the reading journal to record this.	10 minutes reading at least 5 times per week. Parents should sign their child's reading journal as a record.	15 minutes reading at least 5 times per week. This may be completed to a parent or independently as appropriate to reading ability. Parents should sign their child's reading journal as a record.	
Spelling		5 minutes spelling practice at least 4 times per week.	5 minutes spelling practice at least 4 times per week.	5 minutes spelling practice at least 4 times per week.
Times Tables		5 minutes times table practice at least 4 times per week.	5 minutes times table practice at least 4 times per week.	5 minutes times table practice at least 4 times per week.
Maths		One Maths or English Activity per week (15 minutes)	One Maths or English Activity per week (15 minutes)	Two maths or English activities per week (20 mins each)
English		One Maths or English Activity per week (15 minutes)	One Maths or English Activity per week (15 minutes)	Two maths or English activities per week (20 mins each)
Additional Study Activities	Your child's class teacher will provide suggestions for activities that you can do to support your child's learning each term. These are available of the class pages of the school website.			

APPENDIX ONE – STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT SPELLINGS HOMEWORK

We encourage children to use a **“Look, Copy, Cover, Write, Check”** strategy to learn to spell their word lists. This helps children to secure their knowledge and is more effective than repeated testing. The strategy is quite straightforward and works as follows:

1. The child looks at and says the word. (Note: this is a good time to identify any common or known spelling patterns such as “igh” or “l before e”.
2. The child then copies the word
3. The child covers the word with a sheet of paper and then has a go at writing it independently
4. Finally they check to see if they spelled the word correctly. If not, cover again and have another go.

We recommend that practicing spelling should be “fast and frequent”. It is much better to spend only five to ten minutes daily than spending a longer period only once.

Once children are quite secure with a particular word list, then make spelling practice a fast, frequent and fun activity.

You could try:

- Playing hangman
- Spotting the words from their list whilst reading together
- Ask the children to spell a word off their list whilst sitting in traffic lights, in the queue at the supermarket or whilst they are tying their laces.

APPENDIX TWO – SUPPORTING CHILDREN’S READING

Evidence suggests that children who read every day not only perform better in reading tests than those who don’t, but also develop a broader vocabulary, increased general knowledge and a better understanding of other cultures. In fact, there’s evidence to suggest that reading for pleasure is more likely to determine whether a child does well at school than many other factors.

Below are some handy hints to support your child to be a reader. Further advice is available on our School Website.

- Make time to read: research shows that reading with your child for as little as 10 minutes a day can significantly boost how well they do at school. Set aside a regular time every day to read with your child, whether it’s for 10 minutes when they get in from school or reading a bedtime story together. Little and often works best.
- Let your child choose what to read: your child is more likely to enjoy reading if they get to choose what they read. Join your local library for free and help your child explore a wide variety of books from animals and sports to cooking and wizards.
- Explore different reading materials: as well as fiction there is a whole world of comics, magazines, ebooks, audio books and non-fiction for your child to discover.
- Get the whole family involved: encourage your child to read with other family members, such as grandparents, brothers and sisters, and aunts and uncles.
- Bring stories to life: when you read stories out loud with your child, give characters different voices and mannerisms. Try pausing the story and asking your child what happens next. You could also act out parts of the story together.

- Create fun reading challenges at home: on a rainy day you could organise a treasure hunt around the house by giving your child a list of things to find and seeing how quickly they can read the list and collect all the items.
- Be positive: praise your child for trying hard at their reading and let them know it's alright to make mistakes.
- Be a reading role model: your child learns from you, so seeing you enjoying and valuing books can be a great inspiration!

How to support my child with their school reading book

Appleby Primary School will provide regular advice on how you can read with your child at home. Children may be provided with a school reading book from Reception as they reach a level of confidence to enable them to read at home.

We encourage children to read at home regularly and often (at least five times per week) and your child's class teacher will provide a reading journal to keep a record of their reading at home. Parents should sign and date this regularly. Below are some helpful tips to support your child with their reading book at home:

When children are developing their skills of decoding and beginning to read books for understanding:

- Find somewhere quiet and comfortable away from distractions
- Start by "sharing" the book. Look together through the pictures. Ask your child to tell you what they think is happening in the story
- As the child reads the story, ask them to point to the words with the pointing finger on their dominant hand.
- Encourage children to segment and blend (sound out) words that are unfamiliar but then tell them the word if they remain unsure after several attempts.
- Allow time for children to self-correct if they make a mistake
- Children should read a book at a 90-95% accuracy rate without intervention – if your child is not maintaining this level of accuracy, speak to their class teacher to arrange to have their reading level assessed in school to support finding an appropriate book.
- Ask questions about the story and encourage predictions about what will happen.
- Above all else, provide lots of positive feedback and encouragement and show your child the pride and pleasure you take from hearing them read.

As children's decoding skills and they are able to read independently.

- Strike a balance between listening to your child read and encouraging them to read silently and to themselves.
- Provide children with a quiet and comfortable place to read away from distractions.
- Talk to your child about what they are reading to encourage their comprehension skills.
- Include questions that require the child to make an inference about something from the story such as: "How do you think Harry was feeling when the snake appeared? Why do you think it says his palms were sweaty?"
- Encourage children to develop an understanding of the books and authors that they like and how discuss why they have enjoyed a book and make connections to other reading that they have done.