



Homework Policy

Introduction

Everyone has an opinion about homework: for some parents, no matter how much homework is set, it is never enough. For others, a small assignment can cause significant stress at home.

According to the 2018 Ofsted annual report on Parents Views (*Ofsted ceased inspecting homework in 2019*) more than a third of parents did not think homework in primary school was helpful to their children. Parents cited the battles and arguments homework caused as well as the specific challenges it presents to families of children with SEND.

Whatever opinions parents and schools may hold, all the credible research on homework suggests that for younger children, homework has little or no connection with positive learning outcomes. Over the years much academic research has been carried out on the effectiveness of homework; John Hattie's recent and ground-breaking analysis of hundreds of different homework studies found that there was minimal or no impact on academic success in primary schools ([Hattie, Visible Learning, 2023](#)), however, there was a much greater impact of homework on outcomes in secondary schools.

Some studies have even found that children being active has a greater impact on school grades, or that regular family mealtimes can have a greater influence on academic success than homework.

That said, at Kingham Primary School, we believe that home learning (as we prefer to call it) can be beneficial when used to practise and reinforce learning and to help make learning stick, particularly in respect of key basic skills such as reading, spelling and arithmetic. We ensure that the amount and frequency of homework increases as pupils get older. We also believe that when parents use home learning to bond and learn together with their child, the child understands that the family also value learning which has enormous benefits.

Reading

Developing reading fluency and a love of reading is at the heart of our curriculum. The school expectation is that every child in every year group reads or is read to at home every day. There is overwhelming research indicating that reading aloud and being read to has a significant positive impact on children's reading skills and academic attainment. Reading is also one of the greatest gifts we can give to a child!

Children in Reception take home a decodable book, which they are asked to read at least five times a week. This is in addition to sharing their library book or home books with a member of their family. Children in Reception and Year 1 are also set phonics homework each week.

Children in all year groups are expected to read for 15 minutes each night; if children do not manage it one night, they should read extra pages on other nights. Children should read aloud to an adult during the week where possible to support their development of reading fluency and expression. Although many children in KS2 are 'free readers', it is still important that listening to them read aloud occurs during the week. Parents or children can record instances of reading at home in the reading diary, but this must still be signed off by an adult. We also recommend that at all ages children should also have stories read aloud to them.

Spelling

Research shows that the approach of learning spellings by rote has mixed results as children tend to spell the words correctly for that week but are unable to retain or apply this knowledge in their writing. In order to support students to embed spelling patterns into their long-term memory, we ensure that some spellings are repeated.

Students receive a list of words to practise at home, this will include details of the spelling rule they are focusing on in class that week, in addition to one or two of the prescribed National Curriculum spellings.

Each week, children are then taught an additional rule and take home a small number of words relating to this to practise, *in addition to words from the previous week*.

Your child will bring home their appropriately set spellings every Monday, with a new spelling rule covered each week. The number of words will increase as the weeks progress; however, students will only be learning 3-5 **new words** at a time.

Maths

Teaching higher level maths can become difficult if students lack fundamental skills, such as times tables recall and number bonds (*e.g. instant recognition that $7+13=20$*) so it is a crucial aspect of maths lessons, not only in primary education but also in secondary. We recommend a 'little and often' approach to developing times tables fluency, with children in KS2 'playing' Times Tables Rock Stars (TTRS) for 5-10 minutes a night, 4-5 times a week, in order to gain quick and long-term recall of these key facts.

Homework Expectations for each Year Group

Reception:

- Reading at least 5-10 minutes per night 5 times per week
- Set phonics homework 10-15 minutes per week

Year 1:

- Reading at least 10 minutes per night 5 times per week
- Set phonics homework 10-15 minutes per week
- Spelling practice 4 times per week (sent home on Monday)
- Number bonds and times tables practice (later in the year)

Years 2, 3 and 4:

- Reading at least 15 minutes per night 5 times per week
- Spelling practice 4 times per week (sent home on Monday)
- Times tables practice

Year 5:

- Reading at least 20 minutes per night 5 times per week
- Spelling practice 4 times per week (sent home on Monday)
- Times tables practice

Year 6:

- Reading at least 20 minutes per night 5 times per week
- Spelling practice 4 times per week (sent home on Monday)
- Times tables practice
- Grammar and/or Maths consolidation 30 minutes per week

General Home Learning Principles

- Home learning does not always come in the form of a written task.
- Teachers will avoid setting elaborate craft projects that involve gluing things together (this can often feel more like homework for the parents!)
- Teachers ensure that all homework is purposeful and links directly to the curriculum being taught.
- Teachers will reward and praise children who regularly complete homework tasks.
- Teachers mark homework when necessary and give feedback to pupils in line with the marking and feedback policy.
- If children are absent due to illness we will not send homework home. We will assume the child is too ill to work.
- It is not possible to give homework when parents take holidays in term time.
- Homework will not be given during school holidays.
- Opportunities will be provided at lunchtime for pupils needing to complete or catch up on homework tasks
- For parents who would like more home learning than above, please feel free to read, research, write around the class topics. There are also many homework books available online e.g.:
 - www.cgpbbooks.co.uk/primary-books
 - www.collins.co.uk/pages/primary
 - www.swottotspublishing.com/stp-books-titles
 - <https://www.schofieldandsims.co.uk>

Pupils with SEND

Children with special educational needs should be set homework that reflects their ability. Home learning tasks related to practising basic skills must be differentiated by the teacher according to the child's ability.

Tips for Parents

- Always encourage and be positive – provide plenty of praise
- Be patient – give your child time to think and talk
- Try to provide a quiet area for your child where they can work without being interrupted
- Accept that children may forget things – we all do
- Consider offering small rewards or incentives
- Celebrate your child's successes

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