



CROSSLEY STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL



HOMEWORK POLICY

Rationale:

Whilst homework is not statutory, at Crossley Street, we believe that children engaging in purposeful, directed home learning activities enables key skills to be practised and facilitates the retention of essential knowledge. We believe that reading is a vital life skill and encourage all children to read at home regularly, both to practise decodable skills and to foster the love of reading.

We carefully select purposeful, short and focused activities that focus on the key principles of our curriculum, often incorporating our four 'drivers'. In the setting and directing of specific tasks, we aim for knowledge to 'stick' and we aim for vital reading and numerical skills to be retained long term. Our 'Home Learning Newsletter' promotes 'talk' at all ages, as we ask families to discuss our weekly 'Moral Messages' which centre upon the school's underpinning ethos.

The setting and completing of regular home learning can fulfil a range of purposes, such as:

- Allowing parents/carers to take a positive interest in their children's learning, enabling them to see where their child is at, in terms of their multiplication fact recall, reading fluency and spelling aims
- Taking advantage of the resource of home as a source of learning, often tapping-in to the expertise in the family home as parents/carers support children with their learning
- To practise and consolidate skills learnt at school, especially in English and Maths.
- Encouraging self-motivated learning and independence, especially for older children as they prepare for secondary school.
- To enable families to spend time talking about the theme/Moral Message of the week, providing a PSHE link between home and school

From Years 1-5, all families will be emailed a 'Home Learning Newsletter' which outlines a specific Reading focus, a Maths (Number Fact Fluency) focus with an online link, spellings to practise and the 'Moral Message' statement of the week. Each teacher can then also choose a specific skill (Grammar or Punctuation or sometimes a short Science or History activity), that they would like their class to consider to support learning in school.

Additional activities may also be set when it is felt that a child or year group needs extra practice in a specific area, although this will not be set regularly in addition to what is suggested on the newsletter, unless requested by the pupil or parents/carers.

In Year 2, before SATs, children will be given more regular activities to complete during the half term before the Statutory Assessments, to consolidate essential English and Maths skills.

Year 6:

Home learning in Year 6, as expected, is more formal and children and parents are formally encouraged to participate in the activities that the children are asked to complete. All tasks link directly with learning in class and are tailored to individual classes and individuals within each Year 6 cohort. The Year 6 teacher will liaise directly and regularly with the children and parents throughout their time in Year 6 to ensure a transparent and effective home learning experience.

Spellings:

All the children's spellings are chosen by the class teacher and will be based on the spelling rules and objectives as outlined for each year group in the National Curriculum. As with all other home learning tasks, children with additional learning needs may have their spellings differentiated as required. As well as the spellings appearing on the 'Home Learning Newsletter', they are also posted on EdShed (Spelling Shed), where children can play games to learn their spellings.

The children are also encouraged to learn their spellings through the 'Read, Cover, Write, Check' method. The children read the word, see how it is spelt and think about any tricky bits. They cover the word up, write it down and then check to see if they have spelt the word correctly. The child repeats this process over a period of time until the spelling is fixed in his or her memory.

Throughout the week, children are given opportunities to practise their spellings in class, during Early Bird Work or Brain Gym, for instance.

Reading:

We encourage children to read daily and their books are changed often to allow children to read a range of texts and develop their fluency, understanding and comprehension skills. In Nursery, children can choose a book each week, which they can take home and read. In Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, children will receive one decodable phonics matched book each week, that they have read three times in class, to practise reading fluency. These books are sent home until they meet the requirements of the Phonics Screening Check. We then issue books from a range of schemes to promote the enjoyment of reading and reading fluency, and then encourage children to choose their own books from the library once they are confident readers. Children who are still working on Phonics also take home a sharing book from the class reading area, and a library book each week.

Children in Key Stage 2, who haven't passed the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check, also receive a decodable phonics matched book, in addition to books that are chosen to foster their enjoyment of reading.

Early Years – Home Learning Tasks:

As part of the normal admission to school arrangements, parents/carers are given information about home/school links and how best they can support their child's learning at home.

- In Nursery, children can choose a book each week, which they can take home and read.
- In Reception, children receive two books, as mentioned above, and are strongly encouraged to read daily at home. On the weekly newsletter, current reading skills being taught in class are sent to parents, consisting of that week's phonemes, tricky words and segmenting and blending techniques, as well as current Mathematics concepts and skills in other areas of learning. Parents/carers are encouraged to practise these at home regularly. Parents/carers are invited to a reading evening at the beginning of the year, to ensure the home-school link supports our phonics scheme, 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised.'
- Reception children have current vocabulary sent home on a regular basis, to encourage talk time to further activate these words at home.
- EYFS teachers may set other tasks, such as asking children to collect items to bring in, or asking grown ups to send in a photograph for discussion - these are set using the 'Tapestry' learning journal.

Additional tasks:

Children may be asked to complete additional tasks, such as competition entries, but we would like all children to complete these alongside any other homework set that week. These are fun activities, which often have prizes and should be considered enjoyable to complete together at home.

How parents/carers can help:

Support from parents/carers in valuing home learning and encouraging its thorough and careful completion, will increase the effectiveness of the learning set. You can help us by:

- Hearing your child read, or reading to them, every night and asking them questions about what they have read/listened to. The wider the range of the books, the more beneficial this will be. Looking at pictures, talking about what has happened, thinking about what might happen next and discussing characters' feelings are all useful ways to develop understanding of texts.
Reception/Key Stage 1 reading records and Key Stage 2 planners should be signed when your child has read.
- Practising spellings in short, sharp blocks. Even 5 minutes in the car or at breakfast each day can really make a difference. You can use EdShed (Spelling Shed), to practise weekly spellings in a more fun way.
- Practising times tables and key mental maths skills, such as number bonds and addition/subtraction facts. Using the online links on the newsletter, EdShed (Maths Shed) and multiplication.com are all useful websites to support children in a fun way. All children should have instant recall of all times tables by the end of Year 4.
- Writing in your child's planner (Key Stage 2) to give your child's teacher feedback on their home learning and our 'Home Learning Newsletters' is also much appreciated, as we continually aim to work towards the best practice for home learning.

Our aim is to ensure that any home learning is purposeful. We always welcome feedback from children and parents to ensure that we can modify our approach to home learning to ensure it is enjoyable and has an impact on the child's learning.

Reviewed and revised by Carol Harvey: October 2022

To be reviewed: October 2023