



HOME LEARNING POLICY

APPROVED: MAY 2021

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1. Introduction

At Waterside Primary Academy we provide all children with home learning to enable them to practise skills and learning they have already done in school. Sometimes the aim is to repeat something done in class as a practice exercise. On other times, the homework will ask children to apply their learning to a new context. At all times, however, children will not be given work to do at home that they have not learned in school unless it is a project which asks them to find out about something new. For example, to do their own project about a Pathways topic (e.g. World War II).

2. Aims of Policy

We aim to provide opportunities for parents/carers to work alongside their child or children to support their learning in school. This is because we want to work as a partnership in your child's learning – school, the child and their parents working together to help your child to reach their potential.

Furthermore, we use the phrase 'home learning' instead of 'homework' as we want to inspire and motivate our pupils to further their learning for their own personal gain, rather than because it is a task they have to do to 'tick a box'. Therefore, as well as providing basic expectations for home learning, we also provide 'over and above' challenges to motivate children and inspire their curiosity.

3. Our Routines & Expectations

3.1 Reading

Reading is an essential skill for life and, therefore, every child at Waterside Primary Academy is expected to read daily.

Nursery, Reception & Year 1 – Read. Write. Inc.

In this programme, children learn the English alphabetic code: first they learn one way to read the 40+ sounds and blend these sounds into words, then learn to read the same sounds with alternative graphemes.

They experience success from the very beginning. Lively phonic books are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and 'tricky' words and, as children re-read the stories, their fluency increases.

Children in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 have at least two reading books each week. One is a class book which they should continue to read for fluency at home, with the other being selected from a range of books with the same phonetical sounds to embed their new learning. It is vital that children read these books at home, both independently and out loud. Parents and carers are expected to complete the reading records daily to evidence the reading at home. We would recommend at least 15 minutes every day at a time convenient to parents and carers.

For further information about this programme, information for parents is available via the following link:

<https://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/find-out-more/parents/>

Years 2 – 6

Once the children are able to read accurately and fluently, our children transfer onto the Accelerated Reader programme. This transition will generally occur at the start of Year 2, but may be later depending on completion of the Read. Write. Inc. scheme. Pupils develop reading skills most effectively when they read appropriately challenging books – difficult enough to keep them engaged but not so difficult that they become frustrated. This is their 'Zone of Proximal Development' (ZPD). Every Child at Waterside will have their own ZPD, which they use to select appropriate

books to read and then complete a comprehension about. The children complete half-termly 'Star Reader' assessments which determines their ZPD moving forwards.

Although we provide books from our well-stocked 'Woodland Library', Books can also be purchased from Accelerated Reader Book Finder, which allows parents and guardians to select appropriate books in consultation with the children. This allows books to be found which are within their ZPD, of a particular genre and also for their interest level. The link to AR Book Finder is below:

<https://www.arbookfind.co.uk/UserType.aspx?RedirectURL=%2fdefault.aspx>

Children in these year groups are expected to read for 30 minutes every day. This can involve independent reading, reading out loud or reading to an adult or older sibling. We appreciate that it may not always be possible to listen to your child/ren read. Therefore, independent reading can be used. In this situation, we appreciate when parents ask a few summary questions at the end of the thirty minutes. These could include:

- Tell me what happened in your book today (*summarise*)
- Tell me about the characters – what did they do or say or how did they act? What did they do this? (retrieve & infer)
- What do you think will happen next? (*predict*)
- Are you enjoying the book? Why? Why not?

Every year, we will provide parents with questions similar to this to assess their child's reading.

We expect parents and carers to sign reading records for their child daily. These are checked by a member of staff and signed. We also track reading via Accelerated Reader. Should children not be reading at home and completing quizzes when completing their book, a member of staff will contact home and children will need to use their free time in school to read (e.g. playtimes).

3.2 Spellings

Every child in Years 2-6 will be given weekly spellings. These will be taught in school every Monday and tested every Friday. The spellings will include a spelling rule or pattern and also high frequency and common exception words. Children will be set personal targets to achieve and if these targets are not met, they will need to continue learning these during their own time in school.

3.3 Times tables

Every child in Years 1-6 will be set weekly times tables. These will be discussed in class and be tested every Friday. Children will be set personal targets to achieve and if these targets are not met, they will need to continue learning these during their own time in school.

Every child also has access to Times Tables Rock stars to help practise their times tables in a fun, motivating and competitive manner.

<https://trockstars.com/>

3.4 Other Learning

In older year groups, additional challenges may be set for home learning. For example, children may be allocated a punctuation or grammar worksheet. If it is a piece that needs handing in, it is expected to be returned by the following Friday for assessment or for sharing with peers.

The work will always have been explained and discussed in class before coming home; it may be a continuation of classwork, or a maths games already familiar to your child. It is our intention, and good practice, not to send work home that the child cannot already do i.e. parents are not expected to teach new skills. There should be a clear explanation/reminder from the teacher of what is expected.

4. 'Over & Above' Takeaway Home Learning

To encourage home learning of the wider curriculum, children will receive a termly Takeaway Homework challenge sheet with optional ideas of how to extend their learning at home. These will be linked to their current Pathways topics and will encourage study of the foundation subjects (e.g. history, geography, art...)

This work is a fun way to do home learning. It will allow children to develop their creativity in how they wish to present their work and give them some freedom in developing the aspects of the research that particularly interest them. Within this work, children get the opportunity to develop their creative interests.

Although this work is optional, we expect all work to be presented to our usual high standards, including spelling and handwriting. Should we deem this work is excellent and 'over and above' our expectations, children will be awarded with a 'Golden Note'.

5. Overview of Expectations

Year Group	Reading	Spellings	Times Tables	'Over & Above'
Reception	At least 15 minutes per day using Read. Write Inc. books.			These challenge sheets are sent home at the start of each topic (usually at the start of each term). Children can select their own challenge and bring in work on Fridays to share. 'Golden Notes' will be given for outstanding work.
1	Parents and carers are to sign reading records daily.		These are taught in class on Friday, sent out on Fridays and tested the following Friday.	
2	At least 30 minutes per day using Accelerated Reader Books.	Spelling are sent home on Friday, taught in class on Mondays and tested every Friday.		
3				
4				
5				
6	Parents and carers are to sign reading records daily. Once a child completes a book, they must inform their teacher who will allow them to complete their online test in school.			

6. Home/School Partnership

Our staff hope that you can support us in getting the balance right. We want to work together with you to do help your child be the best they can possibly be and reach their full potential. If you have any concerns about the home learning set, or, you feel that the home learning is just right, please do come to speak to your child's class teacher.

It is worth noting that when children deliberately do not attempt to do home learning (and this does not include when family emergencies occur), children will be required to remain inside during their own time to complete their work. Allowing one child to opt out of doing homework whilst everyone else is expected to complete it causes bad feeling amongst a class. We therefore make it very clear that we expect everyone to be treated equally and all children are required to complete home learning.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Headteacher.

The success of this policy will be evaluated by considering feedback from pupils, teachers, support staff and parents. This policy will be reviewed through consultation with staff and revised every two years for the Local Governing Body to approve.