

SPRINGDALE FIRST SCHOOL

We all Matter at Springdale

HOME LEARNING POLICY

APRIL 2013

Policy Statement

This policy has been created to ensure that there is a clear, purposeful approach to home learning at Springdale First School. We believe that home learning not only reinforces learning that has taken place in school but helps children to develop the skills and attitudes needed for successful life-long learning.

This policy relates to commitments made in the Home – School Agreement as well as to the Learning & Teaching Policy and the Assessment Policy.

Research indicates that one of the most powerful forces in ensuring that a child meets their potential is parental involvement in learning.

We recognise that parents and carers have varying views regarding home learning and seek to set activities that enable all children and parents to engage and which can be extended if so wished.

Home learning should be a positive experience and parents/ carers should use their judgment with regard to the length of time spent on an activity or seeking clarification of an activity from school.

Aims

We believe that home learning opportunities should:

- Develop an effective partnership between home and school to support learning
- Promote enjoyment of learning beyond school
- Consolidate and reinforce learning that has taken place in school, particularly of key skills
- Extend learning that has taken place in school
- Encourage independent learning and build habits of enquiry and investigation
- Encourage children to develop a sense of responsibility

Organisation

At the beginning of each school year curriculum information meetings for parents will be held where information will be given regarding learning in school and ways that parents can help with learning at home.

At the beginning of each topic or term, information will be sent home (currently through topic “bubbles”) about the topics, including ways that parents can support and extend learning.

Information about weekly tasks in Years 1 to 4 will be sent home via a home learning book and will include guidance for parents.

It is important that children are encouraged to complete homework tasks and to return them to school at the appropriate time. In this way homework can be marked in a timely way and new tasks set.

Reading

Regular reading is vital and parental involvement is essential, regardless of the age or ability of the child. Reading should be seen as fun and not as a chore. It is better to read frequently for short periods rather than for long periods infrequently.

Early readers:

An important part of home learning is daily reading with parents/carers and discussion of the books read. Home reading logs will give ideas regarding what to talk about when reading in order to promote understanding.

Able readers:

Children should continue to be heard read aloud so that fluency is maintained. When a child reaches Band 8 of the home reading books, parents may prefer to share one or two pages then allow the child to continue independently.

Discussion of texts is vital to ensure full understanding, to extend their vocabulary and to help the child to become increasingly aware of the ways that authors captivate their readers.

Home learning activities may also involve reading a school reading book, a reference book or reading in other contexts such as newspapers, comics, internet sites etc for a variety of purposes.

Phonics and Spelling

In school, phonics is taught through a systematic approach from Foundation Stage upwards. As children's skills develop they learn about spelling "rules." A key aspect of home learning is to learn, practise or apply the skills they have learnt at school.

Words may be sent home for a child to learn and it is helpful if they are practised with an adult. Where words have been sent home there will be a spelling quiz, following this, parents will receive feedback regarding words which children are not yet secure with.

As well as learning specific words the child should be encouraged to identify letter patterns in their reading and to apply what they have learnt to other words when writing.

Mental Mathematics

Having quick recall of a wide range of number facts, including number bonds, doubles, halves, times tables and key information (e.g. units of measurement) is essential to children's success in mathematics. Parents can help significantly with this and so relevant facts for the child to learn and practise will be sent home.

Other home learning activities

From Year One upwards a mathematics, literacy or topic based activity will be set each week via a homework book. These tasks will encompass a wide variety of activities which may include games, practical tasks, research and ICT based learning. Access to ICT is available in school for children who may not be able to easily access ICT at home. (Audits indicate that the vast majority of children have access to both a computer and to the internet).

At times lengthier tasks or projects are set which may run over more than one week and which encourage children to extend their learning or to follow their own lines of enquiry.

All home learning activities set are at a level that is appropriate to the child's age and needs. If a child requires additional support with an aspect of the curriculum the class teacher will liaise with the parent with regard to ways that they may be able to provide specific support.

What home learning is expected?

	Reading (per night)	Phonics and Spelling, Handwriting	Other learning activities
Foundation Stage	5 to 10 minutes. Phase words to practise reading.	Jolly Phonics action, sound and practise of letter formation.	Individual targets are sent home to be worked on throughout the year. Weekly maths challenges from Spring Term onwards.
Year One	15 to 20 minutes	6 – 8 words sent home to learn.	A topic based activity is sent at the start of each topic. Maths activities are sent on alternate weeks.
Year Two	20 minutes. Targets to support reading are included in a home school link book. The first 200 words to read and spell are sent home.	Home learning spelling activities are planned as needed. Spelling quizzes may be included related to the focus of daily word level sessions. We encourage focus on learning and applying letter patterns and, with older children, investigating and understanding spelling "rules" so they can be applied when writing independently rather than learning lists of words.	Maths or topic based activities are sent, usually on alternate weeks. Advice is provided on mental maths strategies that parents can encourage their child to use.
Year Three	Minimum of 20 minutes		Children should spend a minimum of half an hour on written homework per week which covers a range of maths, literacy or topic based activities.
Year Four	Minimum of 30 minutes		

Presentation

Children should be encouraged to maintain the same high standards of presentation that are expected in school in their home learning tasks.

Parental Feedback (Trial May 2013 onwards)

For children in Years 3 and 4 an evaluation slip will be included with each task for parental comments e.g. how independently the child worked, what the child found tricky, how appropriate the task was.

