

Merley First School
Home Learning Policy

Introduction

Home learning is anything that children do outside the normal school day that contributes to their learning in response to guidance from the school. Home learning encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents to support children's learning. For example, a parent who spends time reading a story to their child before bedtime is helping with home learning.

Rationale for home learning

Home learning is a very important part of a child's education and can add much to a child's development. The government made clear its commitment to home learning in the 1997 White Paper, 'Excellence in Schools', where home learning was seen as 'an essential part of good education'. We recognise that the time and resources available limit the educational experience that any school by itself can provide; children benefit greatly therefore from the mutual support of parents and teachers in encouraging them to learn both at home and at school. Indeed we see home learning as an important way of establishing a successful dialogue and communication between the school and parents. Merley First School values Independence and one of the aims of our school is for children to develop as independent learners. We believe that home learning is one of the main ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning.

Home learning plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. We also acknowledge the important role of play and free time in a child's growth and development. Whilst home learning is important, it should not prevent children from taking part in the wide range of out-of-school clubs and organisations, and family activities that play an important part in the lives of many children. We are well aware that children spend more time at home than at school, and we believe they develop their skills, interests and talents to the full only when parents encourage them to make maximum use of the experiences and opportunities that are available outside of school and in the home.

Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of home learning are:

- To enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development
- To help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner
- To promote a partnership between home and school in supporting each child's learning
- To enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered in sufficient depth
- To provide educational experiences not possible in school
- To consolidate and reinforce learning done in school and to allow children to practise skills taught in lessons
- To help children develop good work habits for the future

Types of home learning

We believe that home learning provides a special opportunity for children and parents to work together at home to enhance the learning tasks done at school. This can be done through a variety of ways.

We hope that children will find time to read for 10 minutes or so most nights. Please encourage your child to read with expression and discuss the meaning of any challenging words, and ask questions about text.

The rule for spelling is "little and often". Children have words to learn every week. Please test children (verbally) every day for a minute or two. This is more beneficial than having a once-a-week session. You may find it useful to display the words at home (on the bedroom door or fridge are suggested places.)

As well as reading and spelling, there are many other activities that can help your child with.

For example

- ◆ discussion with an adult on a given topic
- ◆ research: find five facts about.....
e.g. dinosaurs

- ◆ learn rhymes, poems 'by heart'
- ◆ write letters
- ◆ write lists
- ◆ write stories
- ◆ telling the time
- ◆ weighing ingredients for cooking
- ◆ swimming
- ◆ watch Newsround / News / Weather Forecast

I am sure you can think of many more. Home Learning Activities will start from the second week of the Autumn Term. Children will not receive activities the first and last week of the term and over the half term holidays.

In line with our commitment to broaden and deepen the curriculum for our children, we set home learning activities routinely each week which may or may not be subject specific. We expect the children to consolidate and reinforce learning done in school through practice at home. We also set home learning to ensure that prior learning has been understood.

Amount of home learning

We increase the amount of home learning that we give the children as they move through the school. We expect Key Stage 1 children to spend approximately one hour a week doing home learning, although this may well include reading with a parent. We expect the children in KS2 to spend approximately 15-20 minutes per night on home learning but there is no set guidelines.

Pupils with special educational needs

We set home learning for all children as a normal part of school life. We ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to the ability of the child. If a child has special needs, we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way. When setting home learning to pupils who are named on the register of special needs, we refer to the Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

The role of parents

Parents, as the first teachers of their children, have a vital role to play in their child's education, and home learning is an important part of this process. We ask parents to encourage their child to complete the home learning tasks that are set. We invite them to help their children as they feel necessary and provide them with the sort of environment that allows children to do their best. Parents can support their child by providing a good working space at home, by enabling their child to visit the library regularly, and by discussing the work that their child is doing.

If parents have any problems or questions about home learning, they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher. If their questions are of a more general nature, they should contact the Head teacher. Finally, if they wish to make a complaint about the school home learning policy or the way it is implemented, they will be reviewed.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to agree and then monitor the school home learning policy. This is done by the Local Governing Body. Parents are regularly asked for their views on home learning via questionnaires, informal and formal conversations. Our governing body pays careful consideration to any concern that is raised by any parent.

Home Learning Program

The school has devised a home learning program to support children and parents. The program illustrated is a basic entitlement. There will be other opportunities for children to complete other tasks related to the work they are doing in school. From time to time, other homework will be offered to fit in with the topics being studied or issues arising from learning in class.

Appendix A

Plan for 2015-16

Class	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Butterfly and Ladybird	Sound Book	Sound Book	Sound Book	Sound Book	Sound Book
The sound book will need to be returned each day					

Class	
Robin Sparrow	
The children will be tested on their spellings the following All Home Learning to be returned the following.	

Class	
Hedgehog Rabbit	
The children will be tested on their spellings on All Home Learning to be returned on.	

Class	
Kestrel Owl	
The children will be tested on their spellings the following All Home Learning to be returned the following	

Class	
Badger Fox	
The children will be tested on their spellings the following All Home Learning to be returned the following	

The children inwill also receive optional Topic based activities; these can vary in length of time from a week to half a term. These activities will be linked to their learning in school and give the children an opportunity to show off their skills. There is no right or wrong way of completing this and all work will be celebrated in school.