



# Home Learning Policy

(Reviewed and updated October 2017 )

Homework is a very emotive subject on which everyone connected to schools has an opinion. Some parents (and teachers) feel that homework should be set regularly while others feel equally passionately that it should not. There is an accepted feeling that 'you'll never please everyone.'

## The case for...

- ✓ Homework can be an effective way to reinforce learning undertaken in school.
- ✓ It can be an opportunity to develop children's self-discipline, responsibility and time management.
- ✓ It can extend the message that learning isn't something that just happens in school – rather it is a life-long skill which takes place everywhere and at any time.
- ✓ It prepares children for the rigours of homework at their secondary school.
- ✓ Learning in a different way, with a different person's support can aid understanding.
- ✓ Can give parents a useful insight into their child's learning

## The case against...

- Can cause anxiety for children who do not understand.
- Can potentially have detrimental effect on children's attitude to learning & self-esteem.
- Children are entitled to a work-life balance. "Isn't 6 hours of learning a day enough?"
- Some children, often those who would benefit most regularly fail to complete homework as required.
- It is often completed by the child's parent.
- Parents feel unable to assist and may feel like they are the one being tested.
- Parents worry that they are teaching their child to do it 'the wrong way.'
- Additional teacher workload in formal marking and assessing.
- Children often have clubs or activities and commitments that make it hard for them to 'fit in' home work.

## Home Learning

- ✚ Shifted emphasis on 'Home Learning' rather than homework.
- ✚ Shifted emphasis from formal written task to practical, 'applying' activities.
- ✚ Set through weekly 'Learning Blog' which gives practical suggestions to reinforce (at home) learning undertaken in school during the week.
- ✚ On-line support e.g. My Maths, Ruth Miskin Literacy website. – focus on where to go to learn and how to get better at learning.
- ✚ We rely on effective two way communication links between home and school with parents taking responsibility for accessing the Learning Blogs if they wish to support their child's learning at home.

## **Supporting Children at Home - Guidance for Parents**

### **RECEPTION**

- Ten minutes spent reading with an adult or older brother or sister is ideal. It is important that the experience is enjoyable at this early stage and not a chore.
- Letter sounds for the children to practise are an important key skill.
- Work through Home Learning Blog each weekend and try to make the week's learning relevant to home / real world.

### **YEAR 1**

- Daily paired reading - reading aloud to a parent/adult for 10 minutes daily.
- Letter sounds for the children to practise are an important key skill.
- Work through Home Learning Blog each weekend and try to make the week's learning relevant to home / real world.

### **YEAR 2**

- Daily paired reading - reading aloud to a parent/adult for 10 minutes daily.
- Children may be asked to complete activities related to a topic they are studying at school.
- Children will be expected to begin to learn the 2x, 5x and 10x tables by heart.
- Work through Home Learning Blog each weekend and try to make the week's learning relevant to home / real world.
- Children will be expected to practice and learn spellings lists in preparation for weekly spelling tests

### **YEARS 3 AND 4**

- Reading regularly with an adult and discussing key aspects of the text (please see attached guidance).
- Children are asked to learn multiplication tables to enable them to have rapid recall of table facts, based on the individual needs of the child. These are tested regularly.
- Children are asked to regularly practise their number bonds to support their mental maths activities.
- Children may be asked to complete activities related to a topic they are studying at school.
- Work through Home Learning Blog each weekend and try to make the week's learning relevant to home / real world.
- Children will be expected to practice and learn spellings lists in preparation for weekly spelling tests

### **YEARS 5 AND 6**

- Encourage children to use search engines for links to relevant website for learning covered in school.
- Reading regularly with an adult and discussing key aspects of the text (please see attached guidance).
- Children are asked to learn multiplication tables to enable them to have rapid recall of table facts, based on the individual needs of the child. These are tested regularly.
- Work through Home Learning Blog each weekend and try to make the week's learning relevant to home / real world.

- Children will be expected to practice and learn spellings lists in preparation for weekly spelling tests



### Beginning the Journey - ways to help

- Have special times to share a story with your child, either at bedtime or another quiet moment in the day.
- Children need to share the pleasure of stories with an adult to realise the enjoyment that reading can offer.
- Talk to your child as much as possible - conversation is vital to learning to read.
- Let your child see you enjoy reading and point out words when you are out together.
- Borrow picture books from the local library, let your child choose the book they want to share with you.
- Tell your child traditional tales and act them out together - use different exciting voices for the giant or the fairy.
- Teach your child nursery rhymes and let them join in with you. All children love nonsense rhymes and jingles.
- When you look at a book together, show your child how the book works - which way it opens or if it has an index and that the pictures give clues as to the story.
- Let your child turn the pages as you read together and talk about the pictures in the book.
- Help your child to tell the story from the pictures - and to predict what might happen next.
- When you are reading from the text, follow the words with your finger and show your child that text goes from left to right across the page.
- Point out words that begin with the same letter as your child's name.

## Bringing a book home from school

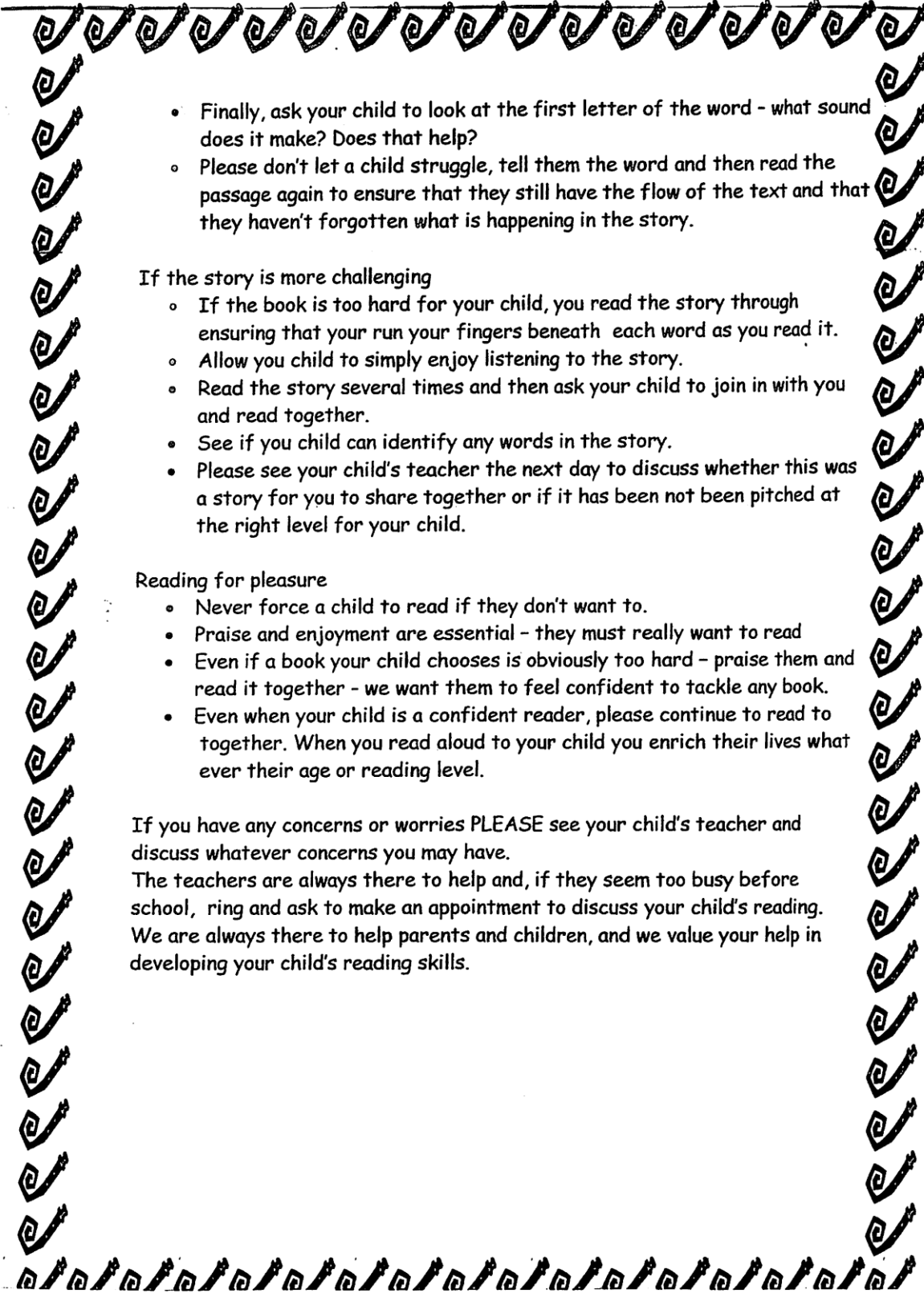
- Your child may bring home a "real" story book - not always a "reading scheme" book as we are trying to foster a love of story and that reading is fun - not a chore that has to be done and that a reading is just about getting through one book to get onto the next one.
- When a book comes home from school - read it together and discuss what happens.
- Some books will have easy parts that your child can read to you - but some will need you to read together - with you reading the difficult bits.
- Don't cover the pictures - they are there as essential clues and should be talked about and used to predict what may be happening.
- Before your child starts to read the book together go through it and talk about the story, so that they know what is going to happen.
- An essential part of reading is memorising, so don't worry if your child appears to know the story and is reading the words from memory, this is part of becoming a reader.

### Making mistakes

- If your child gets the meaning right, e.g. reads home instead of house, don't stop. If what your child reads doesn't make sense, e.g. reads house instead of horse, they will probably stop reading themselves, but if they don't, you read what they have read back to them and ask if they think it makes sense, and then ask them what they think the correct word should be. Then continue on reading.

If your child doesn't know a word,

- You read the sentence immediately before the unknown word and stop and see if your child can guess what word it may be.
- If this doesn't help read on a bit past the unknown word and see if they can then guess the word.
- Look at the picture - does that help?

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- Finally, ask your child to look at the first letter of the word - what sound does it make? Does that help?
  - Please don't let a child struggle, tell them the word and then read the passage again to ensure that they still have the flow of the text and that they haven't forgotten what is happening in the story.

**If the story is more challenging**

- If the book is too hard for your child, you read the story through ensuring that you run your fingers beneath each word as you read it.
- Allow your child to simply enjoy listening to the story.
- Read the story several times and then ask your child to join in with you and read together.
- See if your child can identify any words in the story.
- Please see your child's teacher the next day to discuss whether this was a story for you to share together or if it has been not been pitched at the right level for your child.

**Reading for pleasure**

- Never force a child to read if they don't want to.
- Praise and enjoyment are essential - they must really want to read
- Even if a book your child chooses is obviously too hard - praise them and read it together - we want them to feel confident to tackle any book.
- Even when your child is a confident reader, please continue to read to together. When you read aloud to your child you enrich their lives whatever their age or reading level.

If you have any concerns or worries PLEASE see your child's teacher and discuss whatever concerns you may have.

The teachers are always there to help and, if they seem too busy before school, ring and ask to make an appointment to discuss your child's reading. We are always there to help parents and children, and we value your help in developing your child's reading skills.

