



Elmwood Infant and Nursery School

Home Learning Policy

Date Policy Agreed: February 2019

Review Date: Spring 2021

Article 28 – Every child has the right to an Education

Article 31 - Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities

Introduction:

At Elmwood Infant school, we believe that homework should be enjoyable, build on children's learning and also be something that enables parents to share in their child's learning.

Homework is anything children do outside the normal school day that contributes to their learning and it certainly does not have to be limited to homework set by the school. It encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents to support children in their learning. Parents can take an active part in enriching their child's learning at home through discussion and conversation, playing board games, visits out, reading together, writing shopping lists, cards and letters – the list is endless!

Purposeful homework is an important part of education and can add much to a child's development. We recognise that the educational experience that a school can provide by itself is limited by the time and resources available; children can therefore benefit greatly from the complementary learning that they do at home. We see homework as an important example of cooperation between teachers and parents.

One of our teaching aims at Elmwood is for children to develop the skills to become inquisitive, independent learners and we believe that homework is one of the ways in which children can acquire these skills. Homework plays a significant role in raising a child's level of attainment and the progress made by that child as he or she moves through the school. For example, a child who reads at home on a daily basis is likely to become a confident, independent reader much more quickly than one who is not given the opportunity to read regularly at home. Equally, a child who is supported in learning their number bonds and multiplication facts at home, is generally a much more confident mathematician and able to apply their knowledge to other concepts.

While homework is important, it should not prevent children from taking part in after-school clubs and weekend activities as these play a crucial part in the lives of our pupils. We do not specify exact amount

of time to be spent on a task, as children and families will have their own routines. However, the expectations set out in this policy can be used for guidance.

The Aims and Objectives of Homework are:

- to enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development;
- to help each pupil become an independent learner;
- to promote the partnership between home and school to provide help, support and encouragement for pupils;
- to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school, and to allow children to practise skills taught in lessons;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future.

Whilst there is a legal responsibility for a school to set homework on a regular basis, the school cannot enforce the completion of homework and therefore, will praise the children who do complete their learning at home with an acknowledgement on their work, stickers or dojo's depending on the teacher's reward system. We will not sanction children for failing to complete some, or all of their homework.

Early Years: Nursery and Reception

For our youngest children the activities which teachers set may not be described as 'homework' but they will all support successful learning.

In the Early Years children are expected to read daily at home for about 10 minutes. Children in Nursery and Reception take home a book of choice daily and in Reception they are given a text matched to their reading ability once a week. Reading at home should include an adult or older sibling reading with and/or listening to the child read, support for children to decode simple unfamiliar words and some talk about the text either in English or your family's home language.

We provide a reading homework book so that the children may draw a picture and if appropriate write some words or a simple sentence in response to what they have read. They may make links with their own experiences, write about their favourite part of the book or describe a character.

In Reception we give children key words to learn. This should be done in a fun, practical and short way (5-10 minutes). A key word matching game or finding keywords in books is enough. Teachers/teaching assistants will check on the children's progress in learning these key words once per week in order to check children's progress towards the next set of words.

We use 'Reading Journals' to keep a record of the books the children are reading. Parents have the opportunity to write a brief comment to the teacher after each read. This is optional but is a positive way to keep communication and encourage feedback between parents and teachers. Teachers and

Teaching Assistants will look at the journals once a week and respond if necessary.

Children in Reception are also encouraged to complete a piece of 'free writing' once a week at home. Children can select a writing material (paper, card, book) to take home and on it write about what ever interests them. This may be a letter, story, list or piece of information about a topic of interest.

Key Stage 1

Learning key words/phonic sounds continues in to Key Stage 1. Teachers/teaching assistants will check on the children's progress in learning these key words/phonic sounds once per week in order to progress the children to the next set of words.

Children in Key Stage One are encouraged to choose a text daily, which is matched to their reading ability.

We promote reading at home every day with children and during this time, we encourage parents to:

- Talk about the book, discussing characters, settings or events. This can be in English or the family's home language.
- Ask questions (see 'Reading Journals').
- Help pupils to use their phonic knowledge to read unfamiliar words.
- Talk about punctuation and grammar.

In Year 1 children continue to use the red reading homework books to record the title of the text they have read and write one or two sentences about a character or event from the story.

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Key Stage 1 children have the opportunity to take a maths game home every week. This should be played with both adults and other siblings or family members in order to make it as fun as possible. While playing these games the children will be practising concepts/skills that they are learning at school.

Year 2 have an additional piece of homework, which is set weekly. This could be a piece of literacy or numeracy or link to a foundation subject being taught. The work sent home is directly linked to the topics of the class. When we ask children to study a topic, or to research a particular subject, we encourage them to use the library, as well as the Internet. The children should only study the topic at a level that they are confident with. For example, copying lengthy and complex literature from the internet may not be helpful or easy to take in. Handwriting practice of previously taught joins, is also given out weekly in Year 2.

The see-saw APP is used in Key Stage 1 as a means of communicating with parents. A pre-teach activity for literacy and numeracy is uploaded to the APP for parents to see each week. The activities link to the learning that is taking place in those areas the following week. A copy of the pre-teach activities are also displayed on the classroom door / window.

On occasion we may ask children to take part in whole school project or competition. There may be occasions when we ask children to find and collect things that we are linked to topics we are teaching in class.

How Much Time?

As a guide, Nursery and Reception children should spend about 10-15 minutes on home learning tasks and children in Key Stage 1 between 20 and 30 minutes per day. Ideally, children should have the opportunity to read to an adult (or share a story) each day.

We ask that parents continue to listen to their child read regularly right the way through their primary years, even if their child is a confident reader and, increasingly encourage discussions on the different aspects contained in books, such as the development of the storyline, vocabulary and issues.

Roles and Responsibilities of Elmwood Infant School

- To provide parents with a clear policy regarding homework
- To ensure this policy is fully and consistently followed
- To provide support for parents with information about homework

Roles and Responsibilities of the Teacher

- To plan homework that is appropriate to the needs of the child and which supports the curriculum.
- To set up regular homework in an easily followed routine.
- To be available to talk to parents and children about homework if needed. This may be done by a note with the work, informal discussion, at a curriculum meeting or at parent's evening.
- To ensure that homework is set consistently across classes in the Year group.
- To reward and praise children who regularly complete homework tasks.
- To mark homework appropriately, when necessary and give feedback to pupils.

The Role of Parents

- To support your child in completing homework.
- To ensure your child completes their homework to the best of his/her ability.
- To provide an appropriate environment that will encourage your child to do their best to complete their homework (turn the television off, negotiate a time and place for completing homework);
- To provide appropriate resources for your child to complete their homework.
- Praise your child and encourage him/her to take pride in their homework
- Let the class teacher know of any difficulties or issues your child experiences with their homework
- Support children in ensuring homework is handed in on time.

Parents have a vital role to play in their child's education, and homework is an important part of this role. We have created a 'Top Homework Tips' sheet to support parents when helping with home learning tasks, which is available to read on the policies page of the website. (See appendix 1)

At Elmwood we teach children how to care for the books they read in school. Therefore, if a book is returned to school in a poor condition (e.g., written / drawn in, torn pages, missing pages) we ask parents to pay for the book to be replaced. We ask parents to pay £3 to replace a reading scheme book and £5 for a picture book.

Other activities that can be done at home to support children with their learning

- Talking and listening to your child as much as possible
- Reading – anything and everything! Signs, labels, street names, newspapers, comics, books, join your local library
- Play games – word games, board games, number games, jigsaws
- Painting, drawing, making models from junk or kits, sewing, cutting and sticking
- Educational computer games, software or visiting educational websites
- Cooking
- Writing, telling or making up stories
- Writing letters, invitations or thank you notes
- Practise using scissors at home to cut things out
- Practising number bonds, counting, adding, subtracting
- Visiting places of interest – museums, farms, theatres
- Opportunities to play

Use of ICT

The use of ICT and the Internet has made a significant contribution to the amount of reference material available at home, and the ease and speed with which it can be accessed. However, teachers expect pupils to produce their own work, perhaps by editing something they have found, or by expressing it in their own words. The children are not achieving anything worthwhile by merely downloading and printing out something that has been written by somebody else.

There are many websites containing highly educational material which can have a powerful effect on children's learning. Our school website has links to a number of recommended educational websites that can be used to support homework tasks and promote enjoyment and achievement. Parents should always supervise their child's access to the Internet.

Inclusion and Homework

All children have equal access and inclusive rights to the curriculum regardless of their gender, race, disability or ability. We set homework for all children as a normal part of school life. We ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to the ability of the child, and we endeavor to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute to it in a positive way.

Appendix 1

Use praise as much as you can. Your child has worked hard at school all day so praise them as much as you can - for the work itself, the way your child does it, and how he or she sticks at it. Small rewards help children—stickers work well as does extra time on the computer, or playing a game together.

If either of you start to feel cross stop! Sometimes it can be frustrating working with your child, this is normal and sometimes it might be too much for your child. If this happens stop, staying an extra few minutes won't help.

Don't do the homework yourself - we can tell when this happens! If your child is finding the homework difficult, try and explain or demonstrate how it should be done but **don't** do the actual homework for them. If they really don't understand it speak to their class teacher and they will help.

Remember homework is optional. It is good to get into a routine with your child's homework and for it to happen on a regular basis. However, do not worry if you miss reading a book one night or you don't get a chance to play a maths game at the weekend. You can always start again the next

Parents can make a big difference to their child's learning. The time you spend with your child and the talk involved is the most important part of supporting learning at home. Why not get your child to take the role of the teacher and explain what is expected.

Choose a time that suits you and your child to do homework. When your child's favourite T.V. programme is on may not be the best time or late at night. Try and stick to the same times each day to establish a routine. Remember your child has worked hard at school all day to keep the amount of time slightly less than you know your child can manage.

Try and find a quiet place for you and your child to work, if possible away from the television or noisy computer games. Try to distract your child as little as possible.

Top Tips to Help with Homework



It does not have to be just you who helps with homework. Any trusted person - an older brother or sister, cousin, grandparent, aunt or uncle can help.

Talk to your child about their work. Ask them to explain what he/she has to do. Spend a few minutes together at the beginning, talking about how she or he might do it. Let your child talk as much as possible while you listen. Remember talk can be in English or your home language.

Have as much fun as you can! If possible try and make the work fun. If your child's homework involves a game get other family members to join in. If she or he is doing some maths, do some yourself. If there is a chance to laugh use it.