

THOMAS RUSSELL INFANTS' SCHOOL

HOMEWORK POLICY

'Our children blossom through nurture & challenge'

Our Vision

'to develop the child at the heart of our school community, inspiring them to love learning and believe in themselves'

Introduction

Learning at home is a valuable and essential part of a good education and is one way to help create a partnership between home and school. Regular homework is important, since it gives pupils the opportunity to practise at home the tasks done in class, and helps them work towards improving important skills. It also encourages parents to support and spend time with their children, offering encouragement and praise. All children are expected to take part in a variety of homework tasks to enhance and support their work in class.

Objectives

- ❖ To create a firm partnership between parents and teachers in relation to children's learning.
- ❖ To encourage parents to spend time with their children.
- ❖ To support or extend work covered in class or to practice or consolidate basic skills and knowledge (reading, spelling, number)
- ❖ To have a clear purpose, with parents aware and advised of the role they are expected to play.
- ❖ To inspire a love for learning through exciting learning experiences.

Recommended Times for Key Stage 1 Homework

- ❖ Years 1 and 2 - 1 hour per week (reading, spellings, other literacy work and number work)

Homework Procedures

Homework Projects

Details of a creative homework project linked to the child's topic will be sent home once a year, with a focus for the parent and child to enjoy working on together. The projects should be child led with encouragement and guidance offered by parents. These projects are not compulsory but children are encouraged to participate to some degree. Many parents view these projects as an enjoyable (rather than onerous), structured activity which facilitates an opportunity for children and parents to work and talk together about an aspect of the curriculum.

Home / School Books

Home / school books are used in reception and will be sent home as appropriate on a Friday. These may indicate something that the child has done particularly well in school that week and something that can be worked on at home. Pupils may have an accompanying written slip of instructions for homework or tasks to be completed. Much of the homework will be of a practical nature.

Reading

Ring words, which have a selection of high frequency words to be learnt, are sent home in Reception and are updated as and when the children are ready to progress.

Reading books from the school's reading schemes will be sent home to read each week. The number of books sent home each week is dependent on how long the books are.

Each child has a reading diary which we ask parents and carers to fill in each time they hear their child read. Teaching staff will also comment in these diaries as necessary.

To further support reading skill development, all pupils will make use of the school library and can change their books weekly. They are encouraged to become independent in doing so.

Spellings and Phonics

Each child will be given a sound book when they enter Reception. This will be added to each time your child learns a new sound in order for you to support with this area of development at home. In year 1 the sounds your child will be learning will be sent home each half term.

Reception will bring home character names and high frequency words to learn on word rings. Year 1 and 2 will be sent home words to learn to spell.

Year 1 and 2 Homework Books

Each child is issued with two homework books - one for English based activities and one for Maths. These are sent home on a Friday so that they receive English one week and Maths the next. They will have a week to complete each piece of homework; to be returned to school by the following Friday or earlier.

Homework should be an enjoyable, shared experience for the parent and child.

- A range of tasks should be considered that are purposeful, enjoyable and varied to ensure a balance of activities.
- Suitable activities need not be formal or written assignments, but need sharing with parents.
- With young children short activities of different kinds- simple games, learning spellings and number facts and reading together provide a very important opportunity for them to talk about what they are learning to an interested adult and to practise key skills in a supportive environment.
- The quality of tasks set and the way they are planned to support learning is more important than the precise amount of time spent on homework.
- The allocation of work will match the learning needs of the individual pupils and support the areas of classroom learning being planned by the teachers of the year group.

- Parents in reception are asked to sign in the Home / School book and should return it to school by Wednesday. Teachers will be interested in feedback and parents are invited to enter comments in the diary. A purposeful and informative dialogue should be maintained through our home /school learning logs.
- The efficiency and effectiveness of the Homework Policy shall be monitored and evaluated by the Headteacher. Samples of Partnership Diaries will be checked from time to time and outcomes will be discussed among teaching staff. Parents' views and comments will be taken into account and the policy reviewed as necessary. Key criterion should be the extent to which the policy is contributing to the progress the pupils make at school and their attitude to learning.
- For children with particular or specific learning needs the continuing involvement of parents is very valuable. Class teachers and SENCO will ensure that tasks are manageable for the individual pupil and will work closely with the parent to agree the appropriate time and frequency of homework tasks.

However it is important to remember that these pupils do as much in common with other children as is possible. Homework should not be seen as a way for these pupils to attempt to catch up with the rest of the class.

- Parents should encourage pupils and praise them when they have completed homework.
- Teachers will acknowledge the efforts and achievements of homework activities to encourage and motivate pupils through the use of team points or stickers.

Ideas For Ongoing Parental Support for English

Speaking & Listening.

- This is probably the most important aspect of Language work which can be fostered in the home.
- Rich and extended conversations, which provide the greatest learning opportunities, take place between parent and child during shared activities around the home.

- Once parents have knowledge of school and its sorts of learning experiences, further opportunities arise for conversation, reinforcing and extending class work e.g. sorting out shopping / following up project and topic work / naming items / sorting colours / making comparisons / playing "I spy" and "Simon says".

Reading

- A key factor in reading development is adult attention.
- Emphasis needs to be on pleasure and relaxation and not just an extension of school.
- Parents should be encouraged to set aside, as often as possible, time to share literature with the child and to encourage children to devour the printed word in whatever form it appears - comics / recipes / magazines etc.
- This can be done through:

Sharing reading books: reading to the child / listening to the child / talking & discussing, predicting etc.

Listening to CD's.

Reading signs, notices on way to school.

Practising letter shapes.

Playing "I spy" and other phonic based games.

- Many children have their own books which have been purchased and they are also members of the Public Library.
- Books may also be borrowed from the school and classroom 'library' on a regular basis.
- All pupils take home a reading scheme book at least once a week - this is over the weekend and depending on ability and need, at other times at the teacher's discretion.

Writing

- When children write at home teachers would be pleased to see the results of their efforts.
- This could include such things as a diary kept during a holiday, a report on a special event, a review of a book or an imaginative story or poem.

Ideas For Ongoing Parental Support for Mathematics

- Maths related activities at home will be fun and most likely to be of a practical nature.
- Some particular skills e.g. telling time are often learnt more quickly at home and support the work going on in the classroom.
- In Maths there are lots of practical activities that support the various areas of learning:-

Number:	counting and estimating objects
	ordering objects
	playing board game e.g. "snakes & ladders", "ludo"
etc.	
Money	identifying coins
	playing "shops"
Measuring	find the longest pencil or the tallest table
Capacity	playing with containers of sand and / or water
Shape and space	use of "feely bags"
	finding 2D and 3D shapes
	observing boxes at a supermarket.
	talk about positioning: above, in front, behind etc.
Weight	baking
Time	observing different clocks

sequencing days and events

use of calendars and diaries

- The language of maths can also be encouraged and developed: position (in front, behind etc.) comparison (more than, taller than etc.) shape (triangle, cone etc.) number (zero, nine etc.) order (first, second etc.) money (coin recognition & naming.)

Ideas For Ongoing Parental Support for Science and the Foundation Subjects

- School projects developed at home can give children a different perspective.
- It is hoped that this will generate worthwhile learning experiences, support classroom activities and be regarded as meaningful to the child.
- This can be encouraged in a number of ways, such as :
 - visit to places of interest, galleries, museums etc.
 - reference libraries (use of)
 - designing and making models, games and questionnaires
 - observation work, drawing and collecting data
 - drawing maps and plans
 - interviewing family and friends
 - making recordings and taking photographs

Date: November 2016

Next review: November 2017