



MARSDEN COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL



Marsden Community Primary School Home Learning & Communication Policy

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Home Learning and Communication Policy

2017-18

Non-Negotiables

- All home learning should be provided and returned on a specific day each week as outlined in the Home Learning Policy below
- Home Learning should relate to the key learning for that Year Group and next step learning needs for each group of children in order to allow them to extend their learning at home.
- Parents should be encouraged to comment on their child's learning and progress in Home Reading Records and Home Learning Books.
- All pupils should be provided with:
 - a spelling and maths sheet as well as an activity sheet to support a two week focus on a skill
 - a reading book which is changed regularly
 - a maths and written and / or phonic task every alternate week
 - a half termly themed project
- Teachers will provide parents with a copy of their child's targets in Reading, Writing and Maths at each Parent Teacher Meeting and share the child's stage and end of year goal
- Home Learning will be regularly monitored and reviewed by the SLT and parents and children will provide feedback through questionnaires and interviews

Aims

At Marsden, we aim to set clear guidelines so that teachers, parents and children are aware of the expectations of Home Learning and work in partnership to achieve these. In this way we work together to raise standards in attainment. Home Learning is a valuable life skill and develops good learning and working habits for secondary school and future employment.

Together we can discover, create and succeed



Definition

At Marsden we view Home Learning to be a supported or independent task followed up by adult and child discussion which is undertaken at home and reinforces, extends or enriches current learning and strengthens basic skills.

Principles

Home Learning provides opportunities for:

1. Parents and carers to be clear of where their child is in terms of their learning and understand the expectations at school
2. Parents and carers to know not only what their children are learning but how they can support this learning at home
3. Parents to be aware of the key learning and expectations for that year group as well as their child's small step targets for reading, writing and maths and support their child in achieving these
4. Parents and children to share and enjoy further opportunities for learning together
5. A consistent whole school approach that is clear to all involved and focuses on developing and consolidating basic skills in reading, writing and maths
6. Children to take responsibility for their own learning and broaden the context of their learning so developing resilience, independence and perseverance

Good Practice

- Staff, parents and Governors are involved in developing the policy and this is a process which takes place over time, is constantly updated and reviewed and results in the completion of a written guidance document.
- The policy is co-ordinated by a senior member of staff
- A variety of approaches are used to ensure that parents and children are aware of Home Learning expectations and organisation. These can include Workshops, Open Mornings, Parent Teacher meetings, booklets etc
- Home Learning allocations are made clear
- Home Learning is set in a structured, consistent way to help children develop regular patterns (with parental help if needed)
- There is clear system in place for recognising and praising Home Learning and for responding to children who fail to complete tasks at home.



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- There is a clear system for monitoring how the policy requirements are being fulfilled
- The policy is reviewed regularly with the School Improvement Plan

Provision

Each child will be provided with:

- a zip wallet
- a pencil
- ruler
- Home Learning book
- spelling
- reading book
- home reading record
- maths sheet
- English sheet

Organisation and Time Guidelines for Home Learning

Regular Home Learning should be a positive and enjoyable experience for all involved. When parents have any concerns or questions, they should contact their child's teacher.

The following are recommendations of appropriate time allocations for daily home learning activities:

	Daily Guideline	Day Received	Day Return
Reception	10 minutes (daily)		
Yr 1	15 minutes (daily)	Friday	Following Wednesday
Yr 2	15 minutes (daily)	Wednesday	Following Wednesday
Yr 3	20 minutes (daily)	Friday	Following Friday
Yr 4	20 minutes (daily)	Tuesday	Following Monday
Yr 5 / Yr 6	30 minutes (daily)	Wednesday	Following Monday



Structure of Home Learning

Home Learning will focus on developing basic skills and will have a consistent format throughout school in order to raise standards in reading, writing and maths. It is essential that parents work alongside their children supporting them where necessary or following up independent work with suitable questions. By working in this collaborative way parents will be able to observe and understand how their children are progressing in their learning.

Home Learning is based on a four tiered system.

1. Regular weekly reading (daily if possible)
2. Spelling and Maths key skill focus over a two week period – Activity Guides support parents in suitable games and activities to be getting on with
3. Set tasks in Maths, writing and / or phonics each alternate week
4. Creative half termly project linked to the class theme

Reading

Throughout the school, children are asked, ideally, to read to a family member daily or at least 3 times a week as they become more fluent and confident. There are reading incentive charts in each class to monitor this and children receive rewards for reaching particular reading milestones.

Children need to be reading, enjoying and discussing a range of age appropriate texts: reading book, magazines, comics, age and content appropriate novels and newspapers. They are provided with a Home Reading Record for parents or carers to complete regularly. Comments need to focus on why they have read well and any difficulties faced. Prompt booklets to support suitable questioning following reading are provided by school and are in the Home Learning pack.

Upper Key Stage 2 children will have their reading books changed at least once a week depending on the size of the novel they are reading. Children will choose their own reading book when the class teacher has checked that their reading record has been signed by an appropriate adult at home.



Lower Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 1 children will have their reading books changed twice a week (days will be agreed by the individual class teacher).

Reception children will have their reading books changed twice a week (days will be agreed by the individual class teacher).

Reading Workshops and Reading Breakfasts are held each term to support parents in reading effectively with their children. Strategies and approaches are shared at the Workshops and implemented at the Reading Breakfasts with support from staff.

Spelling

Each child has a 'Spelling Record of Achievement' booklet containing appropriate spelling lists for where they are developmentally. These booklets contain the relevant phonic phases, if appropriate, and / or relevant spelling rules. Every fortnight each class focuses on a spelling strategy that covers a spelling sequence of six sessions. A variety of spellings containing the strategy are included in each box in the 'Spelling Record of Achievement' booklet. In addition, there is a Spelling Activity sheet to support parents in spelling activities they can carry out with their children over a two week period.

There are four spelling strategies covered in the previous half term and four from the current half term. Children will be tested on these within their spelling sessions on the second week of their spelling cycle. Progress will be monitored following the code below:

Amber = child can read the words in any order

Green = child can spell the word out loud and say it in a sentence correctly

Gold = child can write a sentence using the word appropriately and correctly spelt

When children do not achieve Amber, Green or Gold then provision will be put in place in school and broken into smaller chunks for home.



Maths

Each child has a 'Mathematics Record of Achievement' booklet containing appropriate maths skills relating to the development of place value, addition & subtraction, multiplication & division and fractions. These are appropriate to children's developmental levels. Teachers provide learning activities that enable children to model, practise with a game, use and apply these mathematical skills. A Maths Activity sheet supports parents with Maths games and activities they can carry out with their children over a two week period.

Set Tasks – Maths & English

One week the children will be given a maths task to revisit, practise or embed learning in class. The following week this will be a written task, or in EYFS and Year 1, a Phonic linked task. This task needs to be completed in the Home Learning Book and returned to school on the stated day. Parents and carers are welcome to make comments in the Home Learning Book.

The teacher will stamp the book to acknowledge that the completed task has been seen and will pick up any misunderstandings but will not formally mark the book. The purpose of the task is to inform parents of what learning is taking place in school and provide a suitable learning experience that can be completed with adult support at home.

Themed Projects

Each child is given a half termly project to complete which is linked to the theme in class. This is more creative home learning and can be worked on each week and returned to school at the end of the term. This may involve things like: carrying out research; making a model; creating an information book or keeping a diary.



Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers should:

- ensure that Home Learning is consistently set across each year group as appropriate for the next step learning need of each group of children
- provide an explanation for parents when necessary and give guidance on how parents might assist their child. This can be achieved through a written explanation, at a parents' workshop or during a parents' meeting.
- Ensure there is regular Home Learning in an easily followed routine
- Make sure all children are involved in Home Learning and liaise sensitively with parents or carers, as and when necessary, if this is not taking place
- celebrate the completion of Home Learning activities and praise children for their efforts using the school's reward system.

Parents should:

- ensure there is a suitable time and place for their child to complete their Home Learning
- be actively involved with supporting and questioning their child about Home Learning activities
- ensure that their child receives appropriate praise at home when completing tasks
- liaise with the class teacher if they have concerns or require additional advice so that their child can successfully complete Home Learning activities

Children should:

- be responsible for taking home and returning the Home Learning pack to school
- talk about their learning and targets with parents or carers
- complete their Home Learning at a suitable time and place
- become more independent and responsible for carrying out activities as they move through school
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Headteacher, Home Learning Leader and Governing Body should:

- check the school's compliance with this policy
- liaise with parents to ascertain whether the policy is appropriate and effective
- discuss, review and monitor the effectiveness of the policy and its impact on learning.

Responding to and Ensuring Home Learning is Completed

- All pupils will be rewarded using the school marble reward policy for returning their home learning on a weekly basis
- All staff will record when pupils bring their home learning back to school
- Information will be passed to S Butt – Home Liaison Officer – if pupils are consistently not returning homework. Support will be offered to pupils and parents in the form of Home Learning clubs, parent drop in sessions, parent workshops and information sharing sessions
- The most consistent Home Learner will be chosen each term by each class teacher and they will receive an award in the Learner of the Week Assembly. Children will also be invited to share exceptional Home Learning in assembly and / or with the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher.

Equal Opportunities

At Marsden, we recognise that children and their families have differing circumstances and we aim to make our Home Learning activities as consistent, manageable and accessible for all pupils.

If a child is experiencing difficulties in completing their Home Learning for a specific reason, teachers may provide additional time outside normal lessons for children to complete activities.

As the Leadership team rarely authorise extended leave from school, staff do not provide Home Learning for children absent for this reason.

In exceptional circumstances and in consultation with the Headteacher, where a child has specific medical need that lead to long term absence, home learning may be provided.

Monitoring and Evaluation



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In order to ensure that the policy directly contributes to the quality of teaching & learning and raising attainment in reading, writing and maths, the provision of Home Learning will be regularly monitored.

A sample of Home School Reading Records and Home Learning Books will be reviewed half termly by the Core Team as part of the school's Monitoring process. In addition, the scrutiny of Home Learning samples will form part of English and Maths Subject Leader role at the allocated phase of the Monitoring Plan.

Parents will also be given opportunities to share their views with teachers at open mornings, parent teacher meetings and other occasions as appropriate.

Additional Communication

Parent Teacher Meetings

In order for children, parents and school staff to work together in raising attainment and improve communication teachers will identify targets and share them with parents at Parent Teacher Meetings. Each parent / carer will be provided with a target slip to take home after the targets for Reading, Writing and Maths have been explained in depth by the class teacher.

Parents / carers will also be provided with information on the stage their child is working at and their end of year target.

Target Bookmarks

At school each child has a Bookmark Target card with a Reading, Writing and Maths Target.

Targets are changed as soon as the teacher has assessed and evidenced that the child has achieved them. This is normally within 2 to 3 weeks of starting work on the targets although this is not fixed – some targets will take longer to complete and others will require a shorter time frame. Children's Home Learning activities will enable them to practise their targets.

In-formal Meetings with Parents include:



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- Workshops
- Reading Breakfasts
- Open Mornings
- Parent Teacher Meetings

Written Communication with parents includes:

- Letters
- Texts
- Newsletters
- Curriculum Letters

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