



Neville's Cross Primary School & Nursery

Homework Policy

Date of policy: January 2023

Review date: January 2025

Neville's Cross is an inclusive family where all are nurtured to become creative, confident and resilient learners supported to reach their unique potential. Our children develop skills to become active and respectful members of our school, community and society and during their time at Neville's Cross, make memories to cherish.

At Neville's Cross we believe homework is a valuable aspect of children's learning. Homework helps children improve important skills such as independence, resilience, and self-motivation and develop learning habits which are useful to them both now and in the future. We believe that homework is a valuable opportunity for children to share with their parents/ carers things they have been learning and doing at school.

Aims and Objectives

Through our homework policy we aim to:

- enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic development to be the best that they can be;
- help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner;
- promote cooperation between home and school in supporting each child's learning;
- enable some aspects of the curriculum to be further explored independently;
- provide educational experiences not possible in school;
- consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school, and to allow children to practice skills taught in lessons;
- help children develop good work habits for the future.

Homework will focus particularly on developing key skills in Reading, spelling and maths.

Reading is a key aspect of developing a child's learning. Reading unlocks the curriculum and all future learning for our children. Children who struggle to read, find almost all areas of the curriculum challenging. We value parents and carers reading with and to their children because it allows them to enjoy texts they might not be able to read alone, therefore improving language, vocabulary, comprehension, empathy and a vast many other skills which enable a child to access the wider curriculum.

What does homework look like in school?

EYFS

In nursery and reception class we encourage parents to share things children are learning and doing at home via their child's Tapestry account. For some of our youngest children, self-help skills may form part of their homework e.g. learning to fasten their coat, putting on their own shoes – these are learning tasks and skills our children need to become more independent. These are very much celebrated back in nursery/school.

We encourage parents of our nursery children to share memorable events e.g. visits /walks at the weekend as they will form the basis of discussions back in nursery and contribute to vocabulary development, language exploration and listening and attention skills.

In reception class, homework will become a little more formal. As children begin to learn phonics there will be a focus on practising new phonic sounds daily. Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) is our phonics scheme in school and the sounds homework and phonetically decodable books we allocate to your child are matched to the pace of learning in phonics in school. The general expectation is that we learn one new sound each day in school and **children should spend 10 minutes a day** at home practising this sound in their Sounds Book. Class teachers will stick in the sound or HRS (Harder to Read and Spell Words) learned each day and children are encouraged to practise recognising the sound/HRS word and writing the sound or word. Over time, as the sounds build up, we hope that parents and carers will review the sounds/HRS words to help the children keep them fresh in their mind. Reception class teachers will also post some suggested phonics activities each week onto Tapestry to provide much needed blending practice to help children with their word reading skills.

Each week children will bring home a phonetically decodable book which includes the four sounds children have been taught that week. In our review weeks, where no new sounds are taught, children will bring home a book for consolidation. **It is expected that children read their decodable text at least 4 times.** On the first few times of reading the book, the children may need to sound out and blend the majority of words. However, by re-reading the book multiple times, this will help them build their fluency and their sight recognition – which are key to becoming confident decoders. Additional books are allocated via our subscription to the eBook library Oxford Owl (logins are sent home for access). All children in Reception have a planner and it is important that parents comment daily on how their child is managing with reading/phonics at home. This feedback really helps to develop the communication between home and school and school staff highly value the support parents play in developing their child's reading. In addition to their decodable reading book, children will also bring home a book for enjoyment from our school library. These books are designed to be shared at home with an adult as they will not necessarily match their phonic learning and should be used more to discuss characters, feelings, plot and settings to broaden vocabulary and foster an enjoyment of reading.

KS1

Reading

Across Year 1 and into Year 2 the focus on reading will continue. Children move through our ELS phonics programme and again are introduced to new sounds each week. It is really important that this learning at school is supplemented by practise and reinforcement at home by completing the activities set on Seesaw and in the children's Phonics Sounds Book homework book. As in Reception, teachers will send home a phonetically matched book linked to the learning that week (or to provide consolidation). **We ask that these books are read at least four times to build the children's fluency.** Additional phonics books to widen reading experiences are allocated regularly on Oxford Owl (logins can be found in children's planners). Children will also continue to bring home a library book for wider enjoyment. We ask that parents (and the children themselves) record any reading completed at home, including wider books read for enjoyment in their child's planner. Staff

monitor children's home reading practice regularly. Daily phonics and reading practise will better prepare our Year 1 children for the statutory phonic screen in June each year.

As children become fluent, confident decoders and have mastered Phase 6 phonics, usually by the beginning of Year 2, they will move to our colour banded reading scheme. They are assessed regularly by school staff that the book band matches both their decoding and comprehension level. Children are encouraged to continue daily reading, for at least 10 minutes, and can change their reading books when they are completed.

Each half-term in Key Stage 1, a homework overview sheet is sent home which outlines the spelling and mathematics homework for that half-term.

Spelling

We use a progressive spelling programme throughout school to support spelling skills, related to the National Curriculum year group expectations. Each week, children learn a new spelling rule, pattern or how to spell common exception words (tricky words). The half-termly homework sheets outlines the spelling rule/pattern taught that week and suggested activities to help learn the spellings e.g. Look, Cover, Write, Check, Rainbow Writing etc are listed. In addition, children will have spelling activities allocated on 'Spelling Shed' to practise and reinforce spelling rules and tricky words. When your child has completed any spelling practice, we ask that you comment on how your child is managing their spellings in his/her planner. Spellings will be checked/tested in school each week.

Maths

Our half-termly homework sheet in Key Stage 1 outlines some key number skills and facts that the children will be learning at home that half-term, e.g. number bonds, telling the time, counting money etc. Any activities which parents complete at home to support this understanding are highly valued to help children master these skills. Please record in your child's planner when these activities are completed. Children across KS1 will have access to 'Numbots' and as they progress into Year 2, 'Times Tables Rockstars'. These are online programmes and support fluency in number and mathematical operations. Please record when your child has accessed these programmes in their planner.

From time to time, staff may also allocate additional home learning opportunities via Seesaw which link to our wider curriculum and projects, e.g. to carry out some research. We encourage our families to post wider activities and experiences that the children take part in via Seesaw as we love to celebrate these in class.

Reading

Across KS2 we encourage our children to read **daily**. In Year 3 and Year 4, children will continue to have access to our colour banded book scheme. Teachers regularly assess children to see if they are ready to progress to the next colour band based on their knowledge of them as decoders and their understanding (comprehension) of the text. As children move through KS2, they will be encouraged to supplement school allocated books with their own choice of books from our class/school libraries and from home. Parents are still very much encouraged to write in their child's planner daily or encourage children to write in and counter-sign any entries. Teaching staff regularly monitor planners to assure that children are reading regularly at home, in-line with our school expectations.

Spellings

Spellings will be allocated to match learning in class and these will form the basis of a weekly spelling test in school. Activities will be provided on Spelling Shed and spellings may also be put in a child's planner. Children will be encouraged to practise the rule and apply this to a wide range of words (Mystery Words). We ask that when spelling practice has been completed, children and/or parents record this in their child's planner as this is monitored by teaching staff.

Maths

Times Tables Rockstars will feature particularly in Year 3 and 4 to aid fluency in times tables knowledge. By the end of Y4, all children should know their times tables from 1x table to 12 x table. They should display automaticity and be able to recall these facts rapidly. Times tables are key to developing mathematical fluency and underpin work across other areas e.g. division, fractions, decimals. Children who aren't secure within their times table knowledge will find other areas of maths difficult. Children in Year 4 will be expected to sit the statutory multiplication tables check in June each year and are expected to know all facts from the times tables and be able to recall them confidently within 6 seconds. Times Table Rockstars is an excellent way to practise for this, particularly the 'Sound Check' mode. While we use TTRS regularly in school, we know that regular practice at home really does help to make the difference! Again, please

From time to time, staff may also allocate additional home learning opportunities via Seesaw which link to our wider curriculum and projects, e.g. to carry out some research, Black History month projects etc. We encourage our families to post wider activities and experiences that the children take part in via Seesaw as we love to celebrate these in class.

Year 6 – CGP books

In readiness to prepare our children for the transition to secondary school, where homework demands will increase, our expectations regarding homework also increase in Year 6. Children in Year 6 are allocated specific pages from CGP study books to complete in GPS (Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling) and Mathematics. These pages should be photographed and uploaded to Seesaw where staff will monitor and provide feedback/support as needed.

In preparation for statutory assessments in Year 2 and Year 6, children may be set additional activities so they are familiar with the layout of questions and how to approach them.

Improving key life skills

Social skills, evaluation skills, problem solving, managing feelings and working collaboratively are key life skills. Developing key life skills improves children's motivation and approach to life and learning. Working together as a team, sharing and communicating feelings develops a confident child who has no fear of getting things wrong or having a go! Activities, games and helping around the house can develop maths and English skills but also vital life skills and are fun too! For example:

- Board games - Playing scrabble is a great way of learning to spell but also teaches turn taking, problem solving and resilience when losing!
- Card games are great for developing mental maths, independence and patience!
- Dominoes are a great way to learn number bonds.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Have responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

The Headteacher will:

- Promote this policy by raising the status and importance of homework
- Ensure that homework is built into teachers planning
- Keep up to date with new developments with regards to homework
- Monitor and evaluate this policy

Teachers will:

- Integrate homework into their planning
- Set appropriate weekly homework tasks and activities for each child
- Explain when, what and how the work is done so that each child clearly understands
- Provide opportunities for sharing of homework tasks in class and provide feedback
- Monitor pupils' completion of homework tasks and report on this to parents
- Encourage pupils and praise them when homework is completed.

Parents/ carers are asked to:

- Support the homework set
- Read with your child and make a note in their planner.
- Support the school in explaining to children that homework is valued and aids learning.
- Be actively involved in homework with your child.
- Contact the class teacher/ school if you are not sure of some aspect of the homework or your child is experiencing difficulty doing it

Children are asked to:

- Complete their homework and hand it in on time
- Listen carefully in class to make sure they understand what is asked of them
- Make sure they get feedback for their homework
- Complete homework using appropriate writing materials
- Try their best at all homework activities

Amount of homework

As children move through the school, we increase the amount of homework that we give them. This is in preparation of their next stage in learning when they will likely find they have numerous subjects to focus on for homework each week.

Homework is always acknowledged and, according to the task, is either marked or used in class to support learning. Homework completed well is acknowledged and praised. There may be issues arising from the work which the teacher will follow up in lesson time.

Equal Opportunities and Additional Needs

Homework activities will be differentiated, where appropriate, to ensure the needs of all children are best met. We recognise that children have individual learning styles, which means that some tasks can be completed in a number of different ways, while others demand a particular approach.

Use of ICT

Your child's safety is paramount in all matters regarding use of the internet and we advise parents and carers to always supervise their child's access to the internet. The use of ICT and the Internet has made a significant contribution to the amount of consolidatory and reference material available at home, and the ease and speed with which it can be accessed. There are many websites containing highly educational games and material which can have a powerful effect on children's learning.

What will happen if children don't complete their homework?

If a child has difficulty with their homework, then we would expect them to ask for support from the class teacher before the due date to ensure they are able to complete the work, or alternative work can be given. This is useful information as it informs the teacher about the independent capabilities of the child.

Our expectation is that children will complete their homework as it is valuable learning reinforcement and practice. Teachers will monitor children's homework completion and it will be commented upon in reports to parents and carers. However, if for any reason children are unable to complete their homework, we would encourage parents or carers to provide the class teacher with a note in their child's planner or contact the class teacher explaining why the homework has not been completed. For those children who are unable to complete their homework we can offer support. For example, children may be encouraged to join a homework club at lunchtime.