



Birches First School

Believe, Grow, Succeed

Homework Policy

We define homework as any activity that pupils undertake outside of school lesson time, either on their own or with the support of family members. At Birches First we have a strong commitment to parental involvement and see homework as one way of developing this partnership. Homework tasks set by school should always consider the potential benefit to children's learning. Homework expectations are balanced with the school's recognition of the importance of family time and extracurricular activities.

Why give homework?

- It can inform parents about work within class and across the wider broad and balanced curriculum;
- It can further stimulate enthusiasm for learning;
- It can be an opportunity for children to take their learning in their own direction and demonstrate this in a range of media.
- It is a valuable opportunity to rehearse key skills such as times tables, doubling facts, addition sums, spellings, phonics and other key facts;
- Regular reading practise and 'book talk' at home is vital in supporting children's developing fluency and comprehension skills.

Homework at our school

Whilst we support all of the above key principles, Birches First is not a school at which homework dominates home and school life. We accept that not every activity will capture children and parents' imagination and that weekends can sometimes be busy. We believe that homework should be enjoyable and manageable for all concerned and that if it becomes a chore/burden/source of conflict it ceases to be a constructive aspect of teaching and learning.

We do not specify amounts of time that must be spent on a task, preferring individual children and families to set their own routines. We hope the children are motivated by positive incentives and by the tasks themselves; children are not penalised if they fail to complete the work however, discreet homework registers are kept.

Children completing homework project tasks should be given the opportunity to showcase their learning with the class at an appropriate time and appropriately rewarded (e.g. visit SLT, sticker, certificate.)

If a child consistently fails to complete weekly home learning tasks, this is discussed with the child and their parents.

Our routines and expectations;

Weekly homework

Reading

All children are expected to read regularly (recommended 10 minutes per day). Once a child has completed their reading book and it has been signed by a parent, they may change their book in school on the next day. In Years 2-4 children are asked to complete a short book review before changing their book (minimum once per half term.)

Children in Nursery should enjoy regular story times with adults to help foster a love of reading and experience a range of stories and books.

Phonics

Children who are developing their phonological awareness will be set target phonics each week to practise recognising, identifying and writing in a range of contexts.

Spelling

Children in Years 1-4 will be set new spellings every other Monday. These words will follow a taught spelling pattern and will also include a small number of Common Exception Words. It is expected that children practise these spellings regularly in preparation for a spelling test (after 2 weeks, again on a Monday) and assessment by application to writing. Children may also be asked to identify other words than those given that follow the same taught spelling pattern.

Mental Maths

Children, depending on year group/stage of development, will be tested weekly on their recall and application of timetables, mental maths skills (doubles, halves etc) or number facts (number bonds). It is expected that children will practise these skills regularly at home to support their confidence and recall.

Children in Years 2-4 will also access T-T Rockstars to support times tables skills.

In Years 2-4, My Maths homework tasks will be set for children to complete at home across the term (Year 1 from summer term).

Additional (optional) home learning tasks may be set in Year 2 and Year 1 during the year to support and prepare children for Key Stage One SATs and the Year 1 Phonic Screening Check.

Reading books are collected in during Christmas and summer holidays.

Creative Curriculum tasks

In line with each class' curriculum theme, a set of home learning tasks will be suggested and uploaded to the school website. This homework grid will outline 9 tasks linking to a range of curriculum areas. Children may select the tasks that they find most appealing and motivating for completion. Some tasks may specify an outcome whilst some may be more open-ended, leaving opportunity for the child themselves to choose the outcome. A showcase day will be arranged on which children may bring in their completed task(s) and share them with their teacher and class.

In Nursery, home learning opportunities may be suggested on the weekly newsletter to further the learning experiences in class.

We expect children to maintain the same standards for presentation of homework as we set in school i.e. to use their best handwriting and a sharp pencil or pen if they have obtained their 'Pen Licence'.

What to do if you have concerns

If you have any concerns arising from any aspect of home learning as outlined in this policy, please talk with your child's teacher in the first instance. If you still have concerns, please talk with Miss Varricchione.

September 2019.

Reviewed: September 2020.