



# Birches First School

Believe, Grow, Succeed...

...to be the best 'me' I can be!



## Homework Policy

January 2023

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 School we have a strong commitment to parental involvement and see home learning 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 calculations, 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, at Birches First School we do not want homework to dominate 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.

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

## Our Routines and Expectations

### Creative Curriculum Tasks – Set by Teachers (only if applicable and relevant)

In line with each class's curriculum, a home learning task may be suggested, and parents will be informed by Marvellous Me. 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.

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'.

Children have log-ins for Purple Mash to use as they wish to further enhance their learning.

### Weekly Homework

<u>Nursery</u>	<u>Reception</u>	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>	<u>Year 4</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sharing book from school library</li> <li>▪ Phase 1 picture books with comprehension prompt sheets</li> <li>▪ Ten Town</li> <li>▪ Name Writing</li> <li>▪ Sound of the week</li> <li>▪ Regular learning from class with home learning ideas are shared on Tapestry</li> <li>▪ Video links to support phase 1 phonics to help practise hearing, saying and writing initial sounds.</li> <li>▪ Drawing book linking to Tales Toolkit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Phonics book allocated and recorded on BoomReader</li> <li>▪ Sharing book from school library</li> <li>▪ Ten Town</li> <li>▪ Numbots</li> <li>▪ Handwriting (weekly)</li> <li>▪ Regular learning from class with home learning ideas are shared on Tapestry at the end of each week.</li> <li>▪ Phonics weekly sounds are shared through MM.</li> </ul> <p><i>*An additional physical phonics book may be issued to consolidate gaps in learning.</i></p> <p><i>*Phonic Cards if children need additional practise</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Phonics book allocated and recorded on BoomReader (Little Wandle Scheme)</li> <li>▪ Sharing book from school library</li> <li>▪ Spellings sent via Marvellous Me and Spelling Shed App to support</li> <li>▪ Numbots</li> <li>▪ Handwriting (fortnightly)</li> <li>▪ Phonics weekly sounds are shared through MM.</li> </ul> <p><i>*An additional physical phonics book may be issued to consolidate gaps in learning.</i></p> <p><i>Additional (optional) home learning tasks may be during the year to support and prepare children for the Year 1 Phonic Screening Check.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sharing book from school library</li> <li>▪ Spellings sent via Marvellous Me and Spelling Shed App to support</li> <li>▪ Numbots</li> <li>▪ TTRockstars from Spring Term (will be communicated to parents)</li> <li>▪ Handwriting (fortnightly)</li> <li>▪ My Maths</li> <li>▪ Reading Book allocated from Reading Scheme and recorded on BoomReader</li> </ul> <p><i>*An additional physical phonics book may be issued to consolidate gaps in learning.</i></p> <p><i>Additional (optional) home learning tasks may be during the year to support and prepare children for the KS1 SATS.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sharing book from school library</li> <li>▪ Spellings sent via Marvellous Me and Spelling Shed App to support</li> <li>▪ TTRockstars</li> <li>▪ Handwriting (fortnightly)</li> <li>▪ My Maths</li> <li>▪ Reading Book allocated from Reading Scheme and recorded on BoomReader</li> </ul> <p><i>*An additional physical phonics book may be issued to consolidate gaps in learning.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sharing book from school library</li> <li>▪ Spellings sent via Marvellous Me and Spelling Shed App to support</li> <li>▪ TTRockstars</li> <li>▪ Handwriting (fortnightly)</li> <li>▪ My Maths</li> <li>▪ Reading Book allocated from Reading Scheme and recorded on BoomReader</li> </ul> <p><i>*An additional physical phonics book may be issued to consolidate gaps in learning.</i></p>

More information can be found below.

## Reading/ Phonics Book

All children are expected to read regularly (recommended 10 minutes per day). We encourage children to change their reading books at least once per week. To build a realistic picture of your child's reading and to support your child's reading journey, we believe that it is essential for both parents and teachers to have an open and honest dialogue recorded with both positive and developmental comments on the school's chosen reading app, Boom Reader. A bank of comments is available on the website and on Marvellous Me quick links.

### Children who are not yet secure in Phase 5 phonics (typically children in YR-1)

Children will have a phonics book allocated to match their phonics teaching and learning at school. Please read this book with your child as often as possible. The more children see words, the more they begin to read them automatically without having to sound them out (segmenting and blending).

Children will have read this book in school 3 times before it is issued at home. The first time we work on decoding (sounding out) the words, the second time we work on prosody which is reading with expression – making the book sound more interesting with our storyteller voice or our David Attenborough voice – and the third time we look at comprehension. We read the books three times at school because we are working to develop their fluency.

A further book from our phonics scheme may also be issued to address any gaps in phonics knowledge. This is in addition to the phonics book allocated to your child.

### Children who are secure in Phase 5 phonics (typically children in Y2-4)

Children will choose a reading book from their reading band in our reading scheme. Once your child has completed their reading book and it has been recorded on Boom Reader, they may change their book in school the next day.

We ask if you could please try and support your child's reading skills by asking questions and talking to them about the books they have read with these skills in mind. You can find some example VIPERS questions on the website and on Marvellous Me quick links. In Years 3-4, children should complete a short book review before changing their book (minimum once per half term.) This can be completed on Boom Reader through your child's log in. Children are awarded reading gems for completing a book review/ their own comments.

## Sharing/ Library Book

All children including Nursery visit our school library every week and choose a sharing book. Children should enjoy regular story times with adults at home to help foster a love of reading and experience a range of stories and books. Children may be read this book with their adult at home. It is not expected that the children read this book independently.

## Phonics

Children who are developing their phonological awareness (YR/1) 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 each week (day varies with each year group). These words will follow a taught spelling pattern. It is expected that children practise these spellings regularly using the online platform, Spelling Shed, in preparation for a spelling test and assessment by application to writing. Children are tested on the National Curriculum Spelling Lists which are sent home so children can identify which spellings they need to practise further before being retested.

## Handwriting

Children in Years R-4 will be sent home a handwriting book fortnightly with letters/ joins to practise. Children should write 3 lines of each letter/ join and a line of each word focusing on letter sizes.

## Mental Maths

It is expected that children will practise their Mental Maths skills regularly at home to support their confidence and recall. In order to do this, children in Reception – Year 2 should regularly access Numbots. Children's log in details can be found in your child's handwriting book. Children in Reception and Nursery should regularly access Ten Town to support their number learning.

Children in Years 2-4 will also access TTRockstars to support times tables skills (Year 2 children in the Spring Term – this will be communicated to parents). Children will be tested weekly on their times tables.

## 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/s in the first instance. If you still have concerns, please talk with Miss Varricchione.

**Reviewed: January 2023.**

**S Varricchione**

**S Hulme**