

**BEDGROVE
INFANT SCHOOL**



**CHILDREN WORKING
AT HOME**

Children Working At Home

This policy has been written by the Staff and Governors of Bedgrove Infant School in consultation with DfCFS (Department for Children, Schools and Families) guidelines. Reference to parental questionnaires also contributed to the compilation of the booklet to ensure all stakeholders were involved.

Aims of the Policy

This policy sets out clearly the purpose of homework. In general terms these include:

- developing an effective partnership between the school and parents and other carers in pursuing the aims of the school;
- promoting the idea of education as a partnership
- consolidating and reinforcing skills and understanding, particularly in literacy and numeracy;
- exploiting resources for learning, of all kinds, at home;
- extending school learning, for example through additional reading;
- helping children understand that learning also takes place outside the classroom
- enabling children to raise their levels of achievement

Recommended time for homework (Government Guide)

Government guidelines on homework give a broad indication of how much time children might reasonably be expected to spend on homework.

Year Group	Time	Activities
Foundation 1 and 2	40 minutes per week (8 minutes daily)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Sharing reading material➤ Bedtime stories
1 and 2	1 hour per week (12 minutes daily)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Reading with parents or carers➤ Handwriting➤ Informal games to practise mathematical skills

Children should not be expected to spend significantly longer on homework than these guidelines set out. Short activities of different kinds such as simple games, an awareness of phonic sounds and patterns, number facts and of course reading together provide a very important opportunity for young children to talk about what they are learning to an interested adult, and to practise key skills in a supportive environment.

In the Governments view, the main focus of homework for children at primary schools should be on literacy and numeracy.

Approaches for Children

Working at home is not new. All children will be expected to read regularly at home. This will be the main part of the homework provided. **Five to ten minutes quality concentration is worth more than 20 minutes of coaxing and bribing, making it an enjoyable experience for both you and your child.** Children should not spend too long on homework. Free time and play activities are an essential part of the learning process.

Early Years

Every room in the house can provide opportunities for learning experiences for you to share with your child.

Bathroom

Bath times are wonderful for exploring mathematics and science

- Look at the pattern on the tiles – what do you notice?
- Find and name shapes - is the mirror round or square?
- Explain/discuss why the mirror steams up
- Investigate – make a bubble bigger than mine? How did you manage that?
- Use a variety of toys and containers for counting, filling and pouring

Hall/Stairs

- Count the stairs to go to bed - how many spindles are there?
- Measure - how many 'foot spans' along the hall? Do you agree? Why?
- Look at shoe sizes, types, fastenings, patterns on the sole.

Bedroom

- Say the time for bed, to go to sleep, to get up in the morning
- Read a story or tell a story. Discuss, predict and conclude. State preferences and give reasons. Can you spot any phonics you've learnt?
- Talk about the events of the day. What did you do yesterday? What might happen tomorrow?

Kitchen

- Sort the shopping - the tins and boxes, heavy and light, cheap and costly
- Look at different shapes and sizes around the room
- Set the table - are there enough spoons? How many more do you need?
- Estimate then count how many potatoes are on your plate
- Weigh ingredients for cooking. Make patterns with biscuits.
- Compare - is my biscuit longer/ wider or thicker/thinner than yours?
- Pour drinks - is the cup full or empty, almost full, half empty?

Living Room

- Count - numbers on the T.V, clocks, VCR, telephone, newspaper, cards
- Explore the BIG numbers
- Play simple games: playing cards - snap, dice, dominoes, board games
- Complete jigsaws and other puzzles
- Tidy up and count things in – order things in size, shape, colour

Foundation 1 (Nursery)

Children are given a short activity every Friday to complete over the weekend to reinforce learning that has taken place over the week. It is expected to be completed and returned by Monday.

Foundation 2 (Reception)

Children are expected to read every day – either sounds, words or a book every day and on a weekly basis practise handwriting, phonics and numbers.

Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

Children are expected to read every day and on a weekly basis, practise handwriting, phonic patterns and rules and number facts. Much of the homework will need support from parents until the child has developed an independent form of working, at which point the parent will be expected to check through the completed work with the child to assess their success and address problems together.

Working at home should not be seen as a formal paper exercise carried out by children without the help of adults. We want to encourage adult intervention which is why marking returned work is irrelevant and not our policy. We would encourage the parent to alert the teacher if specific difficulties are identified. The school believes that supporting your child in areas of weakness is a far more productive use of the teacher's time than marking collaborative work. Working at home should be seen as supportive to the children's learning and should not interfere with the extra activities, such as swimming, hobbies, clubs and free play which are fundamental to a child's development.

Numeracy

Children spend the first ten minutes of their daily Numeracy lesson on mental maths. This is working out in their heads number patterns and bonds; (from 0 – 10 increasing to larger numbers as they move through school), addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They should be learning off by heart, and be able to recall basic number facts and work out answers mentally.

Early Years – reciting to 10 and counting reliably up to 5 and 10 objects

Year 1 – reciting in steps of 1, 2, 5, 10 forwards and backwards to 10, 20, 100

Year 2 – as above and begin to learn X2, X5 and X10 tables.

Parents can help at home (in a fun and enjoyable way) by:

- Playing games and quizzes using mental calculation
- Playing Snakes and Ladders, Monopoly, Dominoes and other card and dice games to help understand numbers and problem solving
- Encourage children to question and talk about how they worked things out
- Count money in a purse, work out how much things cost, how much change, look at shopping bills, use kitchen and bathroom scales, measure height and length, learn about time, 24 hour clock, days, months, use the TV guide etc.

Literacy

Reading

Reading is the key to unlocking the whole curriculum. Primary years are so important to the development of reading skills and reading for pleasure. Reading to children and hearing them read is vital for this life-long skill to be fully developed. Teachers hear children read throughout the week as they cover curriculum areas and in particular during literacy. They keep their own records of children's attainment. The home/school reading record/diary is a useful way to show you are hearing your child read and to communicate any concerns.

It is good practice to discuss:

- If they enjoyed the book
- What they liked/disliked
- Other books by the same author
- What might happen next
- The characters in the story for example what kind of character do you think they are? What makes you think that?
- Why do you think that has happened?
- Developing a story telling voice
- Why are different types of print used? (**bold**, *italics*, CAPITALS)

Reading for pleasure should be encouraged at all times even if your child is a fluent reader. We also recommend that you and your child join the local library and choose books together. Libraries have books and tapes in other languages and computers are usually available for research activities.

Spellings/Phonics

- Jolly Phonics – taught in the Foundation Stage to help your child learn the letter sounds
- Parents will be given a list of High Frequency words which they can help their children learn at appropriate stages

Writing

In the Early Years concentration is on mark making correct formation of letters, by strengthening muscles and developing fine motor skills. Make sand or salt trays for letter practice and mark making, using squeeze bottle outside or using long pieces of ribbon to draw in the air and manipulating plasticene or play dough.

Children need to practise writing for a purpose which can be in the form of:

- Thank you letters, letters/e-mails to friends and relatives and invitations.
- Shopping lists, instructions, notes and recipes
- Advertisements, news and diaries
- Handwriting practice – **please use lower case letters, not CAPITALS.**

Children may be sent home with specific writing tasks such as book reviews, writing lists, information gathering or comprehension on occasions in support of work being taught in school.

You can encourage your child to review T.V. programmes they have watched or computer programs they have accessed, keep a diary, make up poems, stories, plays etc. Playing games such as I Spy, Pictionary and Charades, will help children to develop their speaking and listening skills.

Other Curriculum Information

At the end of each half term (except for the start of the new year, the Autumn Term), you will be given a Home Guide telling you all about the curriculum areas to be covered in your child's class. Please use this information to spend some time talking to your child about their school day and discuss the things they have been learning. From time to time, tasks will be sent home, which are specifically topic related.

More Working at Home Ideas

- Encourage your child to make collections of things of interest, stamps, money, badges, stickers
- Composing or writing their own songs, poems, stories
- Drawing, painting, model making and other art forms
- Involving your child in everyday activities such as cooking, shopping, gardening, telling the time, handling money, planning journeys/outings or an evenings T.V. viewing, taking photographs, looking at maps or programming computers, remote toys, the satellite navigational device in your car!
- Visiting museums, art galleries, exhibitions
- Travelling on the tube, bus or trains and reading timetables, bicycle rides or nature walks, hiking, fitness trails
- Using calculators and understanding new technologies, developing computer skills and supervised use of the Internet

Further Support

- Many companies are now producing information for parents to work at home with their children. We will keep you informed of any suitable material which is sent to us
- Sainsbury's, Safeway, W H Smiths and other well known store have a variety of books for parents to use with their children at home
- BBC Home Learning Programmes, CD Roms, Early Years CBeebies

Useful websites

- www.parentscentre.gov.uk
- www.teachernet.gov.uk/workingwithparents

Summary

- We know that parents are the child's first teacher and we value your input into your child's education
- Talking to your child and enquiring about their day is showing that you are interested and that you place an importance upon their education even if they are reluctant to respond
- Holding a conversation with your child adds to their vocabulary and helps them to communicate with others express their ideas
- Tasks set from school will be mainly around reading
- We must all allow time for the developmental needs of children and value sport, music, dancing, drama, hobbies, free time, play etc.
- Should parents wish their children to spend more time in structured academic work, materials are available in most bookshops, but please remember that your child is only at the start of a twelve to fourteen year journey
- Please remember that working at home is not necessarily written work. Do not put too much pressure on your child to work on written exercises at home as this can prevent them from concentrating at school and it may cause problems in the future
- Try to spend some quality time talking to your child and include asking them about their learning in school
- As with all other matters relating to the children, teachers are available to discuss working at home with parents

Bedgrove Infant School realises the benefits of working with parents, carers and children and welcomes this partnership.