

RAVENSDALE JUNIOR SCHOOL

HOME LEARNING POLICY

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Introduction

Effective and appropriate home learning tasks serve to reinforce learning and provide a good dialogue between children, parents and school about that learning. Particularly, the purpose of home learning is to:

- Develop an effective partnership and dialogue between the school and parents and pursue the aims of the school
- Consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- Exploit resources (of all kinds) at home
- Extend school learning, for example through additional reading
- Encourage pupils as they get older to develop the confidence and self discipline needed to study on their own

Parents are encouraged to help their child to do well by their own involvement with the child's learning:

Children's lives are enriched in families that 'do things together'. The best (and cheapest!) way you can help is to show an interest in what your child enjoys, achieves and what they find difficult, while giving plenty of positive, loving encouragement.

You can help your child by:

- *Listening to them when they get home from school and talk about their day*
- *Reading to them, even as they get older, and listening to them read to you*
- *Encourage them to join in activities and clubs in and out of school (like Brownies, Cubs, Sports etc.)*

Joining in with some of the family events at school shows how much you value school. After a hard day's work, primary age children should spend their time in the evening being with friends and family, and perhaps taking part in one of the many activities organised for young people beyond school e.g. Brownies, Cubs, Sports, Music and Dance Clubs etc."

School Practice

All children use a **Reading Diary** and are encouraged to read daily, at first to an adult and later privately. A **Home Learning Diary/Book** describes the more specific tasks set, in addition to the expectation of reading at home.

For some parents the key purpose of home learning is to involve them actively in their child's learning with activities such as games, spellings, number facts and reading. For others the main purpose of home learning is to provide opportunities for their child to develop the skill of independent learning.

As children get older, the main purpose increasingly becomes providing opportunities for them to develop the skill of independent learning. Thus, by Year 6 the home learning programme should have a regular weekly schedule and cover a wide range of tasks and curriculum content – ensuring a smooth transition to secondary school. This approach should be supported by co ordination between secondary schools and their feeder primary schools.

The main focus will be on literacy and maths, with other subjects being added as children move up the school. In addition, regular reading with parents is vital (at least 10 – 20 minutes a day). Number tasks will be set each week. In addition, older children will be given home learning of other kinds (gradually increasing in its demands) such as finding out information, reading to prepare for lessons, planning for oral presentations, and undertaking more traditional written assignments. All home learning activities will be carefully designed to meet pupils' needs. They will not be used on a regular basis to 'finish off' class-work, as this imposes too light a burden on some children and too heavy a burden on others.

The demands of home learning will be manageable and tasks are usually given to spread over a week and clearly explained in the **Home Learning Diary/Book** which along with the **Reading Diary** encourage home/school dialogue. The year team are normally responsible for the day-to-day organisation of home learning. The demands on pupils should be monitored to ensure that they are as even and balanced as possible.

The amount of time for home learning activities reflects DCSF guidelines and is as follows:

Years 3 and 4: 1.5 hours a week (for literacy and maths, and for occasional assignments in other subjects).

Years 5 and 6: 30 minutes a day (a regular weekly schedule with continued emphasis on literacy and maths but also ranging widely over the curriculum).

The precise amount of time allocated to home learning will be much less important than the quality of the tasks. These are planned as part of Ravensdale's schemes of work for different areas of the curriculum, particularly literacy and maths. Open investigations form an important and regular element of home learning.

Feedback to pupils is very important and this may be given through class discussion, tests or individual teacher comments on written assignments. The latter is very time-consuming and this should be taken into account when setting tasks. Other strategies will be employed, such as asking pupils to review their work in small groups. Feedback from parents is also useful and regular dialogue with parents is encouraged through the home learning diary in which both teachers and parents record their comments.

The Home Learning Diary will be regularly monitored by the classteacher or a teaching assistant.

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