

LONGWILL SCHOOL FOR DEAF CHILDREN

HOME LEARNING POLICY

January 2013

Home Learning Policy

What the purpose of Home Learning?

- Develop an effective partnership between the school and parents.
- Consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding
- Exploit resources for learning of all kinds at home.
- Extend teaching and learning e.g. through additional reading
- Encourage pupils, as they get older, to develop the confidence and self-discipline needed to study with increasing independence, and prepare them for the requirements of secondary school and their adult lives.
- Balance the curriculum by setting home learning tasks from those areas which have not been recently 'explored'.
- Share with parents on a week by week basis, what children have been learning in school

We aim to

- Ensure a consistent approach throughout school
- Ensure progression
- Ensure the needs of the individual are taken into consideration
- Ensure parents, pupils & teachers have a clear understanding of what is required.
- Improve the quality of learning for our pupils.
- Develop further our partnership with parents.
- **Make learning fun for everyone.**

A balance of English and maths are set in all key stages. In the Reception year, homework will generally be reading or a maths game. From Year 1, home learning activities will be set twice a week, allowing 3 - 4 days for completion. This will be reading and spelling in Key Stage 1. There will be reading, spelling, maths and, occasionally, research and project work in Key Stage 2. Teachers may set 'Home Talk' tasks. This will be an opportunity for the pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding through conversations at home – with parents, siblings, friends and neighbours.

The Use of the Play station Portable (PSP) to support Home Learning.

Every pupil in school has the use of a PSP to record their thoughts, ideas and learning on the PSP. Teachers will set home learning on the PSP regularly. Parents and families are encouraged to participate in such tasks.

How much time should be spent on home learning?

- Home Learning is set regularly and the amount increases as the child gets older. The policy has been designed to allow flexibility. As a guide, it should take the following amounts of time:
 - Year R 5 minutes a night, when possible (share a book or PSP time)
 - Year 1 5-10 minutes three times a week
 - Year 2 5-10 minutes three times a week
 - Year 3 10 - 15 minutes three times a week
 - Year 4 10 – 15 minutes three times a week

- Year 5 15 - 20 minutes three times a week
- Year 6 15 – 20 minutes three times a week
- Parents are notified on which night home learning will be set.
- Home learning should be for the weekdays, leaving the weekends free for family activities.
- Parents are encouraged to spend time reading to their children in addition to the time spent on home learning.
- Furthermore, parents are encouraged to use the video clips and photographs on the PSPs as a vehicle to develop a shared communication about school life and to use the PSP to develop the language skills of their child.
- **Children at Longwill School have a very long day and spend a lot of time before and after school travelling in taxis to and from school. It is, therefore, important that they have time at home to relax and play. We recommend that home learning is done 'little and often' so that they can still have opportunities to relax, play and run about each evening.**

What to expect

- Pupils are expected to complete their home learning tasks.
- Home learning will be planned as part of the overall planning for the class.
- Home learning will be differentiated, taking into account the range of pupil capabilities, in order to provide an equal and appropriate challenge for individuals.
- Generally, home learning will not include finishing off uncompleted tasks.
- Children may be asked to complete their home learning at playtime if they fail to hand work in on time.
- Home learning will be clearly explained to the children and a written explanation for parents will accompany the homework. Often, teachers will create home learning tasks on the PSP and put on resource materials to support parents.
- If home learning is set in the school holidays, it will in general be finishing off a project or researching information for the next term's topic.
- Children will get prompt, written or verbal feedback on their work from the teacher, to show what and how to improve.
- Children need time to play! This is especially so for our children, who often have long taxi journeys before and after the school day.

Parents as partners

- Parents are partners with school in the child's learning experiences. Parents are encouraged to let the child's teacher know if tasks not been completed for any reason, or if the tasks are too difficult or too easy. The best way to do this is to comment on the homework in the homework diary or put a message on the PSP.
- Guidance will be given to parents as to how best to help their children with their home learning, in the form of instructions in the home-school diary or instructions on the sheet, PSP or home learning book. Parents are encouraged to take an interest in their children's learning, to discuss it with them and to give them help when necessary, but not to do it for them.
- From time to time, parents will be invited to workshops e.g. on practical maths and

literacy activities to give them a clearer understanding of how they can support the work done at school.

- Children have a home learning folder and books or worksheets and parents are welcome to comment either directly on the child's work or in the home learning book. Children will also have the opportunity to comment.
- Children are encouraged to use a home learning bag to protect their work.
- A peaceful place should be found where the child can work undisturbed. The television is best switched off and distractions kept to a minimum.

Monitoring the effectiveness of the policy

Homework will be monitored by senior staff each term. Parental feedback will be sought at regular intervals.

All families have been given a copy of the Home Learning Policy and the Q&A booklet.

Review Date: Autumn 2014

Alison Carter
December 2012



THE Home Learning Q&A HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS

Q1. My child keeps forgetting to bring his home learning tasks home. How do I know which days to expect it, so that I can remind him?

A1. Class newsletters at the start of each term give details of what days home learning can be expected.

Q2. My child keeps forgetting to hand it in. What can I do?

A2. Teachers do their best to chase up home learning but it is very time-consuming. Parents can help by reminding children in the morning to give it in. Children are encouraged to be independent as much as possible. We accept this does not always work.

Q3. Home Learning always ends up being a battle. What should I do?

A3. Choose your time carefully. Don't make your child miss his favourite TV programme, or make him do it when he is too tired or hungry. If it continues to be a battle, have a word with the teachers. They may have ways to motivate your child.

Q4. There hasn't been time to do the home learning this week. What should we do?

A4. Teachers are very understanding and accept that there are circumstances where it is not possible to fit it in to a busy week. Write a note to the teacher explaining, or have a word with him/her.

Q5. My child's home learning tasks are too long/too short/too hard/too easy.

A5. If it is taking too long, don't pressurise your child to finish it. It is important for him to have time to play, relax, and spend time with friends and family. Allow him to stop (if she or he wants to) when the time limit is reached and write a note to the teacher explaining why it is not finished. If home it seems to be too hard or too easy, please speak to the teacher. Many children work at a different pace at home and school. Some find it harder to concentrate at home, some find it easier.

Q6. How much help should I give my child?

A6. Be prepared to help your child but not to the point of doing it for them. If your explanation seems to confuse her, stop and talk to the teacher. If you check your child's work and get her to correct her mistakes, please let the teacher know. In years 5 and 6, for project work, helping your child with research would be very valuable.

Q7. My child has got stuck with the maths and won't let me help because I try to do it 'the wrong way'.

A7. Send a note explaining that your child tried but was unable to finish the work. The teacher can then go over it again in school. The way that maths is taught has changed so don't worry if it is different to the way you learned. Talk to the teacher if you want to know more.

Q9. How often should I write comments about my child's home learning and how/where should I do this?

A9. Teachers really value feedback from parents - it is very helpful. If you have time to write comments, please do it as often as possible. Children can write comments too if they want.

Q10. My daughter tries to cheat when reading, by looking at the pictures. Should I cover them up and make her read all the words?

A10. NO! Don't worry - this is completely normal. In *all* stages of learning to read children are actively encouraged to use pictures as clues to the words. It is an important learning step. The whole point of reading is for interest and pleasure; please don't make your child regard it as a 'test' each time. Emphasise your enjoyment and keep relaxed, ready to help with any words that your child does not know.

Q11. I do not agree with home learning tasks - is it compulsory?

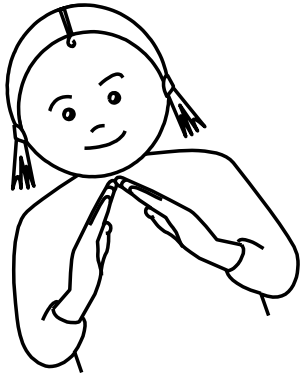
A11. It is not compulsory for children. However we believe that home learning is valuable for many reasons e.g. for children's development and independence and to help parents share and support their child's learning (see Home Learning Policy).

Q12. Will sanctions be taken if it is not handed in on time?

A12. Yes. To stay in at playtime and complete outstanding work.

Q13. Does quality home learning come under the school reward sytem?

A13. YES!



Home Learning

