



# Home Learning Policy

## **Aims**

The main purpose of home learning is to provide children with a range of activities to challenge and inspire them about new learning, to consolidate existing skills and to develop independence. Home learning also provides an opportunity for positive relationships between parents, carers and the school to develop. This will be achieved through a mixture of activities and approaches including a topic 'Paint Palette' and additional teacher directed English and maths tasks.

## **Home learning at Hillcross will enable children to:**

- Consolidate and practice the skills that have been learnt in school, especially key skills within English and Maths;
- Prepare children for new work, topics or concepts through experiences and resources outside of the school environment e.g. trips to places of interest or discussions with familiar adults;
- Develop confidence, good habits and self-discipline with regards to their own personal study;
- Develop thinking skills through the use of a range of thinking tools;
- Learn in collaboration with their parents/carers.

## **Home learning should be:**

- Carefully planned so that it is relevant to the learning taking place in school;
- Appropriate in length and frequency for the children's age and ability (typically not more than 1 hour per week in total in KS1; and not more than 2 hours in KS2).
- Varied in nature - reading, maths, English (including spellings, grammar and key word learning as appropriate).
- Differentiated and adapted to the needs of each child (some children will need parental support throughout, whilst others will be able to work independently);
- Commented on verbally or marked, as appropriate, when returned to school on time;
- Enjoyable - a time for parents and children to spend time together; to talk about work that has been done at school or to find things out together;
- One element of a child's out-of-school experiences: clubs, music lessons and other hobbies have a valid and valuable role to play in the full development of children.

## **Content & Organisation**

- Directed home learning tasks will be set every Friday and will be due in by the following Wednesday.
- Any homework not submitted to staff by the Wednesday morning will be completed at 'Catch-up Club' that lunchtime
- In Years 5 & 6, children will be responsible for collecting any homework set whilst they are absent.
- Weekly expectations for completed home learning are set as detailed below:

Hillcross Primary School  
Home Learning Policy

| Nursery  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared Reading – daily. Recorded at least three times weekly in the Home Reading Journal.</li> <li>Learning Challenges – optional challenges will be included on the half termly nursery newsletter.</li> </ul> |   |  |   |
| Reception  |   |  |   |
| Autumn   | Spring  | Summer   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared Reading - daily. Recorded at least three times weekly in the Home Reading Journal. 2 books sent home weekly*.</li> <li>Daily Phonics Book</li> <li>Weekly Maths Challenge</li> </ul>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared Reading – daily. Recorded at least three times weekly in the Home Reading Journal. 2 books sent home weekly*.</li> <li>Key words (reading)</li> <li>Weekly Maths Challenge</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared Reading – daily. Recorded at least three times weekly in the Home Reading Journal. 2 books sent home weekly*.</li> <li>Key words (spelling)</li> <li>Weekly Maths Challenge</li> </ul> |   |
| *Once reading objectives have been completed, the children are then free to change their books daily if they wish to do so.  |   |  |   |
| Year One   |   |  |   |
| Reading  | Phonics   | Maths  | Directed Home Learning Challenges   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared Reading – daily. Recorded at least three times weekly in Home Reading Journal. 2 books sent home weekly*.</li> <li>Key words (reading)**</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phonics activities</li> <li>Key words (spelling)**</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number bond activities.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One maths or one English challenge each week.</li> </ul>           |
| *Once reading objectives have been completed, the children are then free to change their books daily if they wish to do so. **If not previously learnt.  |   |  |   |
| <b>Optional:</b> Additional activities can also be taken from the paint palette on the school website or from the list of activities at the front of the Home Reading Journal.   |   |  |   |
| Year Two   |   |  |   |
| Reading  | Phonics/Spelling  | Maths  | Directed Home Learning Challenges   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared Reading – daily. Recorded at least three times weekly in Home Reading Journal. 2 books sent home weekly*.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phonics activities or</li> <li>Weekly Spellings</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number bond activities</li> <li>2,5 &amp; 10 times tables.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One maths or one English challenge each week.</li> </ul>           |
| *Once reading objectives have been completed, the children are then free to change their books daily if they wish to do so.  |   |  |   |
| <b>Optional:</b> Additional activities can also be taken from the paint palette on the school website or from the list of activities at the front of the Home Reading Journal.   |   |  |   |
| Key Stage Two  |   |  |   |
| Reading  | Spelling  | Maths Key Skills Practice  | Directed Home Learning Challenges   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared Reading - daily. Recorded at least three times weekly in Home Reading Journal.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Daily spellings practice.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Times tables and related division facts</li> <li>Counting in decimals and fractions</li> <li>Counting in multiples</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One maths challenge and</li> <li>One English challenge.</li> </ul> |

Hillcross Primary School  
Home Learning Policy

|  |  |                                 |  |
|--|--|---------------------------------|--|
|  |  | from different starting numbers |  |
|--|--|---------------------------------|--|

**Optional:** Additional activities can also be taken from the paint palette on the school website or from the list of activities at the front of the Home Reading Journal.

- There may also be occasions when children are given additional homework to support an identified area for development, e.g. handwriting or number bonds, or if they are taking part in additional intervention groups. This will be discussed with individual families as appropriate.

### **Directed Home Learning Challenges**

- The main purpose of home learning will be indicated in the description of the activity. This may be to prepare the children for new learning, to practice and consolidate existing skills and/or to develop independent application of skills learnt. Activities are carefully planned to link to learning that has or will take place in school and to ensure they are appropriate in length and frequency for the children's age and ability. Not all homework will be the same for every child. In some cases home learning will be differentiated (adapted) to meet the needs of key groups within the class.
- Home learning activities for children with **special educational needs** will often be linked to the child's support plan, allowing specific targets to be developed. They will give plenty of opportunity for children to succeed. Some activities will be very clearly focused to allow them to develop their independence, whilst others will enable the children to access the same activity as their peers at their own level, or with additional support from their family, allowing for them to experience the same learning with a varying degree of independence.

### **Home Reading Journal**

- Parents are encouraged to read to/with their child every day as this supports not only their reading skills but it also develops them as writers and across other curriculum areas too. Suggested age related reading material and books that link to specific year group learning will be uploaded to the year group page on the website.
- Even if a child is an able reader, it is important for parents and carers to create opportunities to read to them, question them and talk with them about what they have read. Reading is not merely the decoding of words on a page, it is paramount that children understand what they have read and that they understand what is inferred and suggested from a text—especially those things that are not directly said. A high level of engagement with a text will make them stronger readers, and help them to develop a love for reading! Parents and carers are given a leaflet when they join the school listing a range of questions at different levels that they can use when talking about texts with their child (see appendix 1)
- Parents and carers are asked to write about their child's reading experiences at home at least three times a week. This could be a record of what has been read, a short comment related to the reading guidance pasted in by the class teacher each week during Book Smith Apprentice sessions or a response to the text read. Where children are able to do so, they can write their own comments in the reading journal too. This will also support class teachers in gathering evidence about the children's reading and enable them to make more informed judgements about their achievement.
- At the front of the home reading journal there is a list of additional, optional tasks that can be completed by the children to support their engagement with the texts they read.

### **Phonics**

- The children in reception are given a phonics book. Each time they are taught a new phoneme (sound) it will be added to the book for the children to write, draw, cut out and explore words that contain it. The book is also used to send home general phonics activities that will enable the children to review, practice

and apply the phonemes they have learnt in order to read unfamiliar words and/or to practice segmenting words into each phoneme in order to write them.

- Children in Key Stage One need to be fluent in using their phonic knowledge to decode words confidently for reading and to segment words for writing. Activity ideas to rehearse these skills will be uploaded onto each year groups' homework page. It is beneficial to continue to rehearse skills previously learnt in order to ensure the children remain fluent in their use. Remember NOFAN – do they demonstrate this skill 'Never, Occasionally, Frequently, Always or Naturally'?

### **Key words**

- There are some words in English that cannot be read or spelt phonetically e.g. the, was. The children in reception will take home six key words on a Friday and should practice reading them by sight every day. Once they can do this for all 'tricky' words, they will get sent home again so that the children can practice spelling them correctly.
- Where children have not learnt these words by the end of reception, they will continue with this process in year one.

### **Spellings**

- All children from year 2 to year 6 will be given weekly spellings on a Friday alongside the other set homework. These should be practiced daily throughout the week. A range of strategies to support spelling are taught in school and a chart reminding the children of these is at the beginning of every homework book (see appendix 2). There is no expectation for spellings to be practiced and recorded in the homework book. Parents may like to give their child a special notebook to keep at home or use alternative resources to help them with their spelling such as 'Spellasaurus' (an app on the iPad).
- Formal spelling tests will not take place to 'test' children's spelling of these words but children have their spellings assessed through dictation during spelling lessons and they will also be expected to spell them correctly in their writing across all subject areas.

### **Maths Key Skills Practice**

- Children need to be fluent in a range of key skills in order for them to apply these confidently across the maths curriculum. Activity ideas to rehearse these skills will be uploaded onto each year group's homework page. It is beneficial to continue to rehearse skills previously learnt in order to ensure children remain fluent in their use. Remember NOFAN – do they demonstrate this skill 'Never, Occasionally, Frequently, Always or Naturally'?

### **Hillcross Paint Palette**

- This is a topic based 'Paint Palette' of additional, optional activities for children in KS1 and KS2 to complete. The children are encouraged to choose a selection of activities across the term.
- The tasks will link closely with work completed in school and will be based on the current year group topic.
- The home learning on the Paint Palette is based on 8 different multiple intelligences and closely linked to Habits of Mind to ensure a range of activities to meet and develop all learning styles.
- The activities are differentiated using Blooms higher order questioning and De Bonos Thinking Hats.
- Families are welcome to adapt the outcome of a suggested paint palette task to make it less time consuming or more complex. In some cases the method of presentation for a task is left deliberately open.
- Wherever possible we will make suggestions in relation to places of interest to visit.
- The Paint Palette will be uploaded onto the year group homework page on the school website.
- Completed paint palette activities should be brought into school so that they can be shared with the class as appropriate. There will be Paint Palette displays around the school that showcase the work completed by the children.

### **Marking and Feedback**

- Class teachers and/or teaching assistants will acknowledge all entries in the Home Reading Journal and children will be given verbal feedback as appropriate.
- Directed home learning challenges will be marked by the teacher with brief written feedback relating to the learning objective if it is handed in on time. The class teacher, in line with the schools assessment, marking and feedback policy, will often use pink and green highlighters in their marking. Pink will indicate where the child has met the learning objective (tickled pink) and green will indicate areas for development (green for growth).
- A designated member of staff will oversee the general use of Mathletics and will check regularly for those children who are making best use of this valuable resource. Any certificates printed off at home will be recognised and displayed in school. Please email [info@hillcross.meton.sch.uk](mailto:info@hillcross.meton.sch.uk) if you come across any inconsistencies or errors in the programme. The customer service department are generally very quick at addressing any issues raised with them.
- Children will be given verbal feedback on their completed Paint Palette learning and where appropriate they may also receive written feedback in the communication book/homework book.

### **Homework Presentation**

- Children will complete their home learning in their Home Learning books, unless stated otherwise. We expect the children to complete the tasks to the same high standards of presentation as they would during school based learning. Homework that is consistently presented below the level of school expectations work will be re-written at 'Catch-up Club'.
- In line with school policy:
  - ✓ Writing will be in cursive script.
  - ✓ Letters will be formed legibly and of an appropriate and consistent size.
  - ✓ Writing will sit on the line.
  - ✓ Writing will start by the margin.
  - ✓ Writing will continue to the end of each line.
  - ✓ From year 3 all children will write in a black or blue handwriting pen (a pencil can be used at home if a handwriting pen is not available).
  - ✓ Pencil will be used to draw lines and pictures/diagrams.
  - ✓ Where mistakes are made they will be crossed out neatly with one straight line using a ruler and a pencil.
  - ✓ No coloured pens such as felt tips or gel pens will be used directly into homework books.

### **Homework Books**

In key stage 1 home learning books will have a list of key words, phonics grids, spelling strategies (year 2), a hundred square, times tables grid (year 2) and cursive letter chart to support home learning.

In key stage 2 home learning books will have spelling strategies, a grammar glossary and times tables grids to support home learning.

### **Use of ICT**

- Activities requiring the use of ICT will be incorporated throughout the home learning tasks which will include opportunities for research and different forms of presentation.

### **Teacher's Responsibilities**

- The teacher will ensure that the home learning tasks are set as prescribed in this policy.
- Directed tasks will clearly indicate if the work relates to learning that has already taken place in school or if it relates to new learning.
- Directed tasks will be clearly written so that children and parents understand what is expected.
- Directed tasks will be differentiated to suit the needs of all children within the class but all mandatory aspects of homework will be consistently expected from all children unless there is a specific reason for adjustments to be made.

Hillcross Primary School  
Home Learning Policy

- Wherever possible, home learning will be discussed with the children before they go home on a Friday so that any queries can be resolved before they leave school.
- Class teachers will indicate directly to parents where work is to be differentiated by level of support provided at home for specific children.
- The teacher will mark work and provide appropriate feedback (verbal or written) in line with the schools marking policy as long as it is handed in on time.
- Teachers will ensure that work is available for children who are absent when it is set. In year 5&6 the children are responsible for collecting homework that was given out in their absence.
- Teachers will highlight the focus for directed home learning challenges on their weekly planning sheet.
- The Paint Palette will be reviewed alongside medium term planning and staff will submit the Paint Palette to the senior leadership team before the end of each half term.

### **Parent/Carer Responsibilities**

- Parents/carers will encourage and support their children to complete home learning tasks on time and to the best of their ability.
- Home learning tasks will be completed in the Yellow Home Learning book and be presented in line with this policy.
- Parents/carers will work in partnership with their children but ensure that the children take responsibility for completing the work set. If the children need a lot of support please let the teacher know (see parent comments below).
- Parents/carers will praise their child for their efforts, making it clear that they value work done at home.
- Parents/carers will talk to a member of staff as soon as possible if they or their child need any additional support or guidance to complete tasks set.
- Parents/carers will comment on home learning tasks where appropriate using post it notes or additional note paper to inform staff of key information such as how much help was provided, if there were any areas children found particularly easy/difficult and any other pertinent information. These comments are valued by staff and form an important aspect of a teacher's assessment of a child's progress and development over time.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to attend any curriculum workshops or other family learning opportunities that will help to develop their own skills, knowledge and understanding in order to support their child's home learning

### **Help for parents**

- Parents are encouraged to speak to a member of staff if they do not understand the homework set or if they are unsure how to help their child. It is often a long time since parents have had to think about the concepts being taught and in some cases the strategies children are expected to use as part of the curriculum have changed since they were taught at school.
- The school will also be developing a 'Homework Help' page on the new website where we will upload useful websites, parent workshop PowerPoints and other useful documents to support parents with strategies to help their children at home. Parents are encouraged to let the school know via [info@hillcross.merton.sch.uk](mailto:info@hillcross.merton.sch.uk) if they find anything useful that can be shared with other parents and we will upload these too.
- We will also begin a frequently asked questions page so if you have a general query please send that in via [info@hillcross.merton.sch.uk](mailto:info@hillcross.merton.sch.uk) and we will share the answer with all parents.

### **Children's Responsibilities**

- Children are responsible for completing their home learning tasks on time and to the best of their ability.
- Children will complete home learning tasks to a high standard of presentation expected in school and will complete written home learning tasks using the Hillcross Cursive script.
- Children will work in partnership with their parent/carers and value the support being offered to them.

Hillcross Primary School  
Home Learning Policy

- Children will talk to a member of staff, as soon as possible, if they need any additional support or guidance to complete tasks set

**Monitoring**

This policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team. Monitoring will be termly and the senior leadership team will collect in Home Learning books and Home Reading Journals to ensure consistency across the school. Pupil voice will be undertaken to identify aspects that are working well and those that require further development.

**Equality Impact Assessment**

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. We are committed to treating all pupils fairly and challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion. This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any member of the school community and it helps to promote equality and accessibility at our school. The curriculum is planned to be inclusive and meet the needs and interests of a full range of learners. Activities and resources will be differentiated and adult support used to ensure that children assess the curriculum and make the best possible progress.

**Safeguarding Commitment**

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

**Written:** Dec 15

**Reviewed:** June 16

**Approved by Staff/Parents/Pupils/Governors:**

**Date of next review:** Autumn 16

## Appendix 1

### QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER

#### READING TOGETHER.

Reading is not merely the decoding of words on a page, it is paramount that children understand what they have read and that they understand what is inferred and suggested—especially those things that are not directly said.

This booklet contains sentence starters to help you to create questions to ask your child when reading with them. They will develop your child's comprehension and can be asked about characters, settings and actions.

#### 1.KNOWLEDGE

What is ...?

How is ...?

Where is ...?

When did \_\_ happen?

How would you explain ...?

Why did ...?

How would you describe ...?

Can you recall ...?

Can you select ...?

Who (what) were the main ...?

#### 2.COMPREHENSION (Understanding)

How would you classify the type of ...? How would you compare /contrast...? How would you rephrase the meaning ...? What is the main idea of ...?

Which statements support ...?

Can you explain what is meant ...?

What can you say about ...?

Which is the best answer ...?

How would you summarize ...?

#### 3.APPLICATION

How would you use ...?

What examples can you find to...

How would you solve \_\_ using what you have learned ...?

How would you show your understanding of ...?

How would you apply what you learned to develop ...?

What other way would you plan to ...? What would result if ...?

What elements would you choose to change ...?

What facts would you select to show ...? What questions would you ask in an interview with ...?



#### 4.ANALYSIS

What are the parts or features of ...? How is \_\_\_ related to ...?

Why do you think ...?

What is the theme ...?

What motive is there ...?

What conclusions can you draw ...?

How would you classify ...?

What evidence can you find ...?

What is the relationship between ...?

Can you make a distinction between ...?

What ideas justify ...?

#### 5.EVALUATION

Do you agree with the actions?

Do you agree with the outcomes?

What is your opinion of ...?

How would you prove ...? Disprove...?

Can you assess the value or importance of ..?

What would you recommend ...?

How would you rate or evaluate the ...?

#### 6.CREATE

What changes would you make to solve ...?

How would you improve ...?

What would happen if ...?

Can you elaborate on the reason ...?

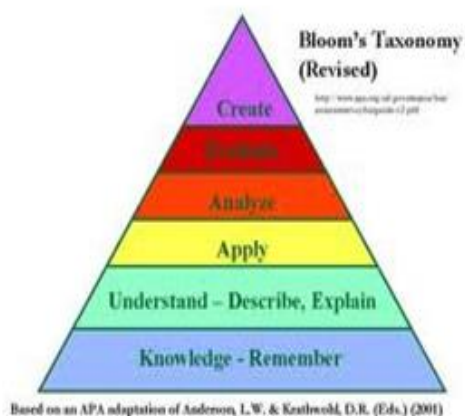
Can you propose an alternative ...?

Can you invent ...?

How would you adapt ...to create a different...?

How could you change the plot (plan) ...?

What could be combined to improve (change) ...?



Hillcross Primary School  
Home Learning Policy

Please read to or listen to your child read every day as this supports not only their reading but it also develops them as writers and across other curriculum areas too.

Even if your child is an able reader, it is important to create opportunities to read to them, question and talk with them about what they have read. A high level of engagement with a text will make them stronger readers, and help them to develop a love for reading!

The questions in this leaflet are based upon the levels of questioning developed by Bloom and Anderson which are used across the school. These ensure children think about learning at a variety of levels ranging from the retrieval of information at level **1** (Knowledge) to generating new ideas at level **6** (Create).

The use of Higher Order Questioning (HOQ) helps to engage and challenge children by:

- \* building on their prior knowledge and understanding in order to create new understanding and meaning
- \*focusing children's thinking on key concepts and issues
- \*helping them to extend their thinking from the concrete and factual to the analytical and evaluative.
- \*promote reasoning, problem solving, evaluation and the formulation of hypotheses
- \*to promote pupils' thinking about the way they have learned.

#### Appendix 2 - Spelling Strategies



spelling strategies.pub