



Oasis Academy Don Valley

Primary Phase Homework policy: September 2020 (V4)



Oasis Academy Don Valley Homework Agreed Approach Policy

Introduction

Learning at home is an essential part of good education. Regular homework is important, since it gives pupils the opportunity to practise at home the tasks done in class, and helps them work towards improving important skills. It also encourages children to become confident and independent in their learning, which will help throughout their time at school and, later, in adult life.

Homework activities are an important part of our home/academy agreement. All children are expected to take part in a variety of homework tasks to enhance and support their work in class.

This policy is designed:

1. To ensure consistency of approach throughout the Academy.
2. To ensure progression towards independence and individual responsibility for all children.
3. To ensure that parents/carers have a clear understanding about the expectations for themselves and our children and can find out more about children's work in the Academy.
4. To extend and support learning outside of the classroom.
5. To provide opportunities for parents and children to work in partnership and enjoy learning experiences.

Some important points from the guidelines:

Homework refers to any learning or activities that children are asked to complete outside lesson time, either on their own, with parents or carers or part of homework club.

Homework need not, and should not, get in the way of other activities that children do after school - such as sport, music and clubs of all kinds. These activities can be very beneficial

Children are set the following homework:-

- **English - Reading** – Parents are encouraged to read regularly (at least 3 times per week) with their children, to look at books together and practise reading skills. To promote reading at home, we hold a competition every half term. We expect a child to read at home at least 3 times a week and parents/adults at home to sign their home academy journal to communicate this has happened. If this is done, the child receives a rocket to put in the jar. If they read more than this, they receive extra rockets. Throughout the term, the rockets build up and at the end of the term one lucky rocket reader will be selected from the jar and wins a prize. Teachers track the parental engagement using the tracking format and for those children who don't receive this support at home, teachers ensure the identified children have extra reads.
- **English - Phonics/spellings (SPaG)** – Children have a phonic activity and or list of spelling words/patterns/rules, which go home on a weekly basis. Each week children will have a new phonic or spelling activity linked to the phonemes/national curriculum word lists they are learning during the week.
- **Maths** – This homework reinforces skills and concepts taught in class
- **Topic homework menus** – Children are given a topic homework menu at the beginning of each half term to support other areas of the curriculum such as researching about something scientific, history or art based.
- **Nursery** – Children in nursery are given a short weekly homework task. These tasks are planned using the Development Matters and refer to their knowledge organisers. The children in nursery take home a reading book to share and have a topic homework menu.
- **Knowledge Organisers** – These are sent home in every year group, this will support learning at home as they provide children with the knowledge that they are learning each half term. They may also be set specific tasks/quizzes linked to their organiser.

English

As previously mentioned reading and phonics/spelling (SPaG) homework is on-going throughout the term. There is a weekly expectation that children will read and practise their phonics/spellings at home.

Some other homework activities that could link with English are:

- Planning, drafting or proof reading a piece of writing
- Re-drafting a piece of writing e.g. from a newspaper report to a first-person recount or a poem to a piece of descriptive writing
- Playing games that reinforce phonic or other word-level work
- Using the library/Internet/newspaper for research
- Grammar activities

Maths

A weekly Maths task is set that will reinforce concepts taught during the week in class. Out-of-class activities need to be frequent, short and focused. They should be varied, interesting and fun so that they motivate children, stimulate their learning and foster different study skills.

Some other homework activities that could link with Maths are:

- Do an activity which makes use of the home context such as counting money or weighing and measuring
- Play a number game or work on a puzzle
- Learn some number facts or multiplication tables by heart
- Think about how they might solve a problem
- Prepare their contribution to a group presentation to the class
- Consider focusing on the calculation focus for the half term

Other areas of the National Curriculum

A half termly topic homework menu is set where children are given a topic homework menu at the beginning of each half term to support other areas of the curriculum such as researching about something scientific, history or art based. Children will be given nine options and are expected to complete at least two. Children will present and share this homework with their class.

Online learning

Within homework menus and on curriculum newsletters homework will be set using the online platforms, for example:

- Purple Mash
- Mathletics
- Timestable Rock Stars
- Lexia
- Microsoft Teams

Children from Nursery – Year 5 also have the facility to communicate, share and respond to online learning through the use of '2email' on Purple Mash. Y6 children have their own email address that they can use to communicate and submit learning. Children are taught how to use these platforms and facilities as part of the Computing curriculum and all log in details can be found in their home/academy journals.

Knowledge organisers

What are knowledge organisers? A knowledge organiser is a set of key facts or information that children will learn over the half term. The first page for any subject is set out in the same way which helps students to visualise the layout of the page, and which in turn helps them to memorise the information better. Knowledge organiser may also have a test page for retrieval practice where they recall and record what they have learnt.

Why do we use knowledge organisers? Research suggests that equipping children with the skills to be able to learn, retain and recall knowledge is key to the educational success. Our focus therefore is on the retrieval and application of knowledge to a range of different contexts so that children know and retain information for longer. The secret to success is to regularly revisit the knowledge to be learned. This helps transfer the knowledge from the short-term memory to the long-term memory. This not only helps to make 'learning stick' but it also frees up our short-term memory for day to day learning and experiences.

How will a knowledge organiser help my child? Knowledge organisers will be made available at the start of each half term to help them remember what they are learning. Instead of forgetting previous learning, children will continually revisit and retrieve prior learning from their memories.

Here are some strategies for your child to use with their knowledge organiser:

- Sharing and discussing, taking time to read and discuss the knowledge on their knowledge organiser with them.
- Question and answer, asking your child questions and they use their knowledge organiser to find the answers, or can the children think of their own questions?
- Look, cover, write, check is a method of learning where children; Study a key word, fact or piece of information. Say it aloud a few times. Cover it up with a piece of paper or their hand. Wait at least 30 seconds and say or write what they have remembered. Check their version to see if they got it right. Correct any mistakes.
- Self-Test is where children create short quizzes with the answers on the back and then on a subsequent day/week/term attempt to answer the questions from memory before correcting any mistakes.
- Flash cards is where children create cards with key words, dates, events or people on one side and the definition/information on the back. These can then be used to quiz alone or with support.
- Clock-learning is a method where children study a section of the knowledge organiser for 5 minutes and then spend another 5 minutes recording everything they can remember. They should include what they can remember from the knowledge organiser but also anything they can remember from lessons on that topic.
- Knowledge organiser activities, this is where your child's teacher will set specific homework tasks where you they will use their organiser to complete

How will a knowledge organiser help me to help my child? Many parents/carers ask us how they can help to support their children at home. Many are worried that they do not have all of the subject specific knowledge to be able to help their children and some worry how to check that their children have done their homework and revision. The knowledge organisers will help you to do all this.

Learning award links

At OADV children can achieve a range of learning awards to promote key skills in Maths and English, for example handwriting, number bond and times tables. Children can track their progress towards these awards in the back of their home/academy journal. Children are encouraged to practise the skills required at home. Teachers track the progress children are making towards these awards and will provide children with specific homework and support to help them achieve their target. Learning awards will be presented to children on a Friday during our Academy's 'Pride Assembly' to celebrate their achievements and raise their profile across all children.

Assessment, Feedback and Communication

One vital ingredient in successful homework is effective assessment and feedback from teachers. In most cases feedback will be given through homework being marked by the teacher following the Academy's marking and feedback policy. The teacher will also keep the child and parent informed about progress by writing comments in their home/academy journal, for example spelling test results and comments about their reading. Teachers will also provide regular feedback through the online platform, Purple Mash.

When children have completed a task from their Topic homework menu this may not have a written outcome. Strategies such as displays, assemblies, homework updates in newsletters and social media help to give positive messages about children's efforts.

Homework is encouraged and monitored by the use of careful tracking by the class teacher. Class teachers will support children accordingly and may direct children to attend the homework club for support. If children are not completing homework on a regular basis the class teacher will discuss this with parents and will support children by using intervention time during the academy day to aid completion. Children will receive a 'Homework hero certificate' at the end of each half term if they have completed all of their homework over the term. The list heroes is displayed on classroom windows, facing outwards to promote the focus on homework to parents and celebrate additional effort. Homework will be displayed within classrooms.



Differentiation

Homework should be designed in such a way as to give all children the means to participate. Reading, spelling and mathematics should be differentiated by task, whilst more open-ended project work would be differentiated by outcome. Differentiation by support might be achieved through providing a more detailed writing frame for the less able.

Children included on the SEND register could have their work linked to individual targets. In some cases it may be counter-productive to expect a child to complete homework.

Inclusion

It is easy to ensure equal opportunities and access for all, but this does not necessarily apply to children's home circumstances. Some strategies for promoting equal opportunities might be:

- Make a list of basic resources that might be expected from home
- Find out which families have access to a computer and the internet and try to give those who have not greater access within the Academy
- Design homework tasks to be equally boy-and girl-friendly
- Ensure that homework is not always written so those who prefer to work in other medium (e.g. oral, drawing, model-making, performing) have an equal chance to succeed
- Consider the socio-economic messages around a task e.g. planning a foreign holiday
- Provide children with the opportunity to attend a homework club for those who need quiet space and additional support.

How staff at OADV support this policy:

- By providing a range of homework tasks and online activities to consolidate and extend learning in class.
- By ensuring that children have a clear understanding of the tasks involved and a common understanding of the high expectations held of them individually, according to their ability.
- By monitoring the completion and standard of and liaising with parents where appropriate to support children when academy expectations are not being met

How parents can help to support children:

- Aim to provide somewhere peaceful and suitable for children to work without the distractions of television, other family members and pets.
- Provide encouragement and support to children when they require it.
- Support our academy in explaining to children that homework is valued and aids learning.
- Encourage children and praise them when homework is completed.
- Be actively involved in their children's homework.
- Sign and date their reading records (**encourage Rocket Readers**).
- Ensure their children's homework is completed on time and to a high standard.
- Communicate any difficulties or questions through the home/academy journal or in person.

Children are expected to:

- Tackle home tasks promptly and with a positive attitude.
- Take pride in presentation and content, acknowledging the high personal standard expected.
- Be organised so that necessary books and equipment are not left at the Academy.
- Take responsibility for handing in the completed task on the agreed day.
- When appropriate use the home/academy journal in a responsible manner to record homework.

Homework will be expected to be returned by the agreed deadline unless advised otherwise by the class teacher.



OASIS ACADEMY DON VALLEY
Topic Homework Menu
Spring Term 1



Class.....

Starters

Mains

Desserts

Name