

ST WOOLOS PRIMARY SCHOOL



HOME LEARNING POLICY

DECEMBER 2021

Introduction

This policy refers to the Home Learning (previously known as homework) that takes place throughout the year and is not specifically about how we organise online learning or remote home learning., even though lots of the information will apply to both.

At St Woolos we believe that education is a partnership between home and school. We also believe that pupils should have a valuable say in their learning. We have responded to the changes in the new curriculum by consulting with pupils and taking their research and ideas into account.

Our pupils value spending time with you, and all parents play a very positive role in supporting their children with their home learning. The more you value learning at home, the more children will value it. The more meaningful it is for them, the more they will remember it. You make all the difference to your child!

Home learning could be a written or online task, could be research and poster making or it may simply consist of playing a particular game or performing an activity such as making an autumn leaf collection.

It serves its purpose if it:

- challenges pupils
- consolidates or develops an area of knowledge and
- motivates them.

Home learning is most effective when it involves you and your child spending time together.

READING



All children have either a reading folder or book bag in which to carry their individual home reading books and they are expected to bring these daily. These home reading books are read at home (or in school with reading volunteers) and they help children to practise skills learned at home.

The Reading Response book accompanies children's individual home reading books. These Reading Response books let your child's class teacher know that your child is reading at home regularly and give your child the chance to respond to what they are reading. This is an important reading skill.



Please sign your child's home reading book and make a comment if you would like to.

SPELLING



Children learn sounds (or phonics) from the very beginning of Nursery. They follow the Jolly Phonics scheme (which teaches children to link an action with a sound) and teachers also use other methods and approaches.

Children learn by seeing letters and words, by hearing sounds and by playing games with letters (e.g. rearranging them).

Parents are encouraged to adopt this approach when helping their children with their spellings. (A leaflet is available in school.)

We use the following strategy:

Look - Cover - Say - Write - Check

Children have:

- a small book to take spellings home
- or may have spelling/phonics/key words sheets (FP)



Please sign your child's home spelling book when you have helped them with their spellings.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Languages, Literacy and Communication (LLC)

General LLC home learning may comprise any number of written activities such as story writing, questionnaires, reports, dialogues, comprehension, letters or personal journal writing. It is likely that this home learning will also fulfil cross-curricular criteria by relating to other subjects or topics.

Mathematics and Numeracy(M&N)

Parents are encouraged to involve their child with activities such as helping with measuring, weighing or counting money at home to help them develop a secure understanding of maths concepts beyond number.

It is important that as children progress throughout the school they gain a secure knowledge of their times tables. The *99 Club* supports children with developing a secure knowledge of the multiplication tables.

Science and Technology/ICT

Like Maths, Science home learning may be set when it is felt to be appropriate. It will complement work covered in the class and will seek to develop children's skills and knowledge.

Humanities (Geography/History/R.E./Business/The World of Work)

Home Learning may be given in these subjects as and when necessary and may be part of class project work.



Class Home Learning Information

FOUNDATION PHASE

Nursery	<i>Children will be encouraged to gather collections or to make something at home. These activities develop collaboration between the parent and child and will be given at various times throughout the year.</i>
RDA and RH	<i>Phonics Keyword sets and Phonics Word Sets are sent home in a bag regularly to practise</i> <i>Occasional activities to develop a topic.</i>
1DM, 1M	<i>Reading scheme books taken home daily and returned daily with an activity completed in their Reading Diary.</i> <i>Spelling taken home on Monday. Test the following Friday.</i> <i>Occasional activities to develop a topic or practise sounds.</i>

2D, 2JB

Reading book taken home daily.

Spelling taken home on Friday. Test the following Thursday.

Occasional activities to develop a topic or practise sounds.

KEY STAGE 2

3/4J, 3/4S

Reading book taken home daily

All children to bring their Reading Diary into school least once a week.

Spelling taken home Monday. Test on following Monday

5/6AP, 5/6SP
and 5/6W

Reading book to be changed when required (dependent on size of book).

Spelling taken home Monday. Test on following Monday.

- All classes from Year 1 upwards have a 99 Club tables test on a Friday.
- Additional tasks / activities may be given at different points in the term.
- Where appropriate, unfinished work in class will be sent home to be finished and all homework must be neatly presented.
- Parents are expected to initial the work that their child has done to confirm that you have had sight of it.



Children in Foundation Phase classes will have a Spelling book.

Junior classes have a separate Home Learning book and Spelling book.

All children have a Reading Response book.

All home learning is marked regularly and may be discussed at Parental Consultations.



Please sign your child's homework book or sheet.

Please feel free to note down any help that you have provided your child or any difficulties they may have had.



How can I help?

- A set of accompanying leaflets will help to give you suggestions about how to help your child in specific areas. (Given out separately)
- Listen to your child read or practise their sounds and spellings regularly.
- Ask your child regularly about their home learning.
- Please sign your child's spelling and home learning books weekly.
- Praise your child for settling down to their home learning (Even if they are having problems, it is better that they have tried in the first place.)
- Be positive and praise them for anything that they try hard with. Let them know that you are pleased with them.

What if my child is struggling with home learning?

- By all means help your child with their home learning, but please do not do it for them. Teachers need to know whether a child has been able to complete the work or not so that they can give appropriate help.
- Please do not push your child if they are finding the work difficult. It's better to have a chat with their class teacher so that they know where the child is having difficulties. Home learning is a positive learning tool as long as it is not causing the child to be upset at home.

How can I find out more?

- Ask your child's class teacher for advice at other pre-arranged appointments after school.
- The school regularly runs Family Learning Workshops throughout the year to help parents find out about ways to help their child in school. Please join them if you can. There will also be a number of family learning presentations added to our website to help you access information more readily.

- GEMS (Gwent Education Minority-Ethnic Service) staff can help with parents whose first language isn't English and we will let you know about that.
- If you think that an additional information session or course would be helpful for parents, please let us know.
- If your child has an Individual Development Plan because they need support in a particular area, join us at one of our parent coffee mornings for children on IDPs (when they are able to run).

It is only by working together that we will get the best for your child.

LEARNING GOALS, VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

The New Curriculum for Wales, which will be introduced in schools in 2022, has at its heart four core purposes for all learners and these drive all of the activities that we provide for pupils.

They are that pupils will be:

- **Ambitious, capable learners**
- **Enterprising, creative contributors**
- **Ethical, informed citizens**
- **Healthy, confident individuals**

In addition, we expect all members of our school community to be:

KIND - FAIR - CURIOUS - ASPIRATIONAL

There are a number of ways in which we develop the learning behaviours that fulfil these goals and values.

The information on Building Learning Power and Creative Habits of Mind, will help you with this.

BUILDING LEARNING POWER AND GROWTH MINDSET



Building Learning Power (BLP) helps children to think about the ways in which they learn and think (meta-cognition) and it is based on the work of Guy Claxton. It helps them develop effective learning and thinking behaviours. They learn that finding things difficult or making mistakes are very important parts of the learning process and they mustn't give up.

The four key BLP behaviours are:

Being:

- **Resilient**
- **Resourceful**
- **Reflective**
- **Reciprocal**

We are teaching children about having a **Growth Mindset**. They may talk about being in the **Learning Pit**. This means that they may be stuck but are developing strategies to get themselves out and develop new learning behaviours.

These behaviours help them to stick at learning, even when it is tricky and to understand that even if they can't understand or do something yet, they soon will. We want children to develop learning behaviours that will equip them for life.

When children understand about how they learn best, it helps them to become confident and creative thinkers. We teach children that it's ok to fail first, because we learn a lot through our mistakes just like James Dyson or David Beckham.

It's only by failing or getting stuck, that we learn to get better and become more creative thinkers.

(Read books or see films on YouTube by *Carol Dweck* to find out more about Mindset.)

CREATIVE HABITS OF MIND



Our Involvement in the Arts Council For Wales Lead Creative Schools school has led us to introduce the 'Creative Habits of Mind' approach across the school. The Creative Habits of Mind are based on the work of Guy Claxton, Art Costa and Bill Lucas.

Over previous years we have taught children about the four key aspects of Building Learning Power, and these link up with the Creative Habits of Mind which we have moved towards using these in our conversations about learning with children.

(The BLP aspect has been added to the Creative Habits in green.)

Building Learning Power	Creative Habits of Mind	What they mean
	INQUISITIVE	Wondering and Questioning/Exploring and Investigating/ Challenging Assumptions
RESILIENT	PERSISTENT	Tolerating Uncertainty/Sticking with Difficulty/Daring to be Different Managing Distractions (Resilient)
RESOURCEFUL	IMAGINATIVE	Playing with possibilities/ Making Connections/Using Intuition/ Questioning (Resourceful)
REFLECTIVE	DISCIPLINED	Crafting and Improving/Developing Techniques/Reflecting Critically/ Developing Meta-cognition (Reflective)
RECIPROCAL	COLLABORATIVE	Co-operating appropriately, Giving and Receiving Feedback, Sharing the 'Product' (Reciprocal)

All children from Nursery upwards are developing skills in mapping the change in their Creative Habits of Mind (Thinking Skills) as they follow new learning.

At the beginning of a block of thematic study, children map where they think their thinking skills are, they focus on ones to improve and they then revisit these at the end of the block, to plot their improvement.

Children are encouraged to refer to these Creative Habits of Mind when they are evaluating their own work, and that of others.

By doing this, they will develop effective and powerful learning behaviours for life.

Please take every opportunity to join us with Family Learning sessions, either online or in school (once Covid restrictions are lifted). Please also let us know if you would like us to include any different aspects into our Family Learning sessions.

You will make a difference to your child with every activity that you do and everything that you do with your child at home will help them now and in later life.