

# Summercroft Primary School Homestudy Policy

## Introduction

We believe that home and school should work closely together developing literacy, numeracy and other skills so that they become part of everyday life and are not simply seen as something taught by the teacher at school. Parents and carers are important educators of their children too.

Homestudy at Summercroft provides a means by which parents and carers can actively take part in their children's learning. Parents and carers have an important role to play.

Many opportunities arise out of school, in the home, at the shops, on holiday and in life in general to stimulate and reinforce the literacy and numeracy taught in school. Thus working together we can greatly enrich a child's education.

## 1. The Purpose of Homestudy

The purpose of homestudy is to:-

- Develop an effective partnership between the school and parents and other carers in pursuing the aims of the school.
- Consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
- Explore and develop resources for learning, 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, and prepare them for the requirements of secondary school.

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As children get older homestudy provides an opportunity for children to develop the skills of independent learning, and this should increasingly become its main purpose. It is important that children should gradually get into the habit of regularly devoting periods of time, which may not be long, to study on their own. By the time children reach Years 5 and 6 their homestudy programme should cover a wide range of tasks and curriculum content. This approach will benefit their learning and also ensure that, in relation to homestudy as much as to other aspects, their transition to secondary school is as smooth as possible.

### **2. The Type and Amount of Homestudy**

Children may be expected to do some of the following activities:

- Reading-sharing books for enjoyment and practice; reading for research.
- Looking for things or finding out information to do with a class topic.
- Learning sequences (e.g. tables, spellings) for quick recall.
- Writing practice and completing final drafts.
- Preparing for classroom discussions, talks or debates through sharing ideas at home.
- Learning words for songs and plays for a performance or presentation.
- Organising kit for PE and materials for use in school. Remembering to bring these items to school!
- Completing a classroom task. This may be voluntary or teacher-directed.
- Planning for the above and any other activities.

Every term the school sends home an outline of the curriculum for each year group. This helps parents/carers to support the learning process.

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In Years 1 and 2 pupils will spend about 1 hour per week on homestudy tasks. In Years 3 and 4 it is envisaged that pupils will spend about 1½ hours per week on homestudy increasing to 2 ½ hours per week in Years 5 and 6. This includes daily reading.

The Government recommendation is that homestudy happens daily. At Summercroft we believe that it should happen for five days a week, allowing children time to take part in other worthwhile activities.

To allow parents/carers to fit homestudy into their routine we generally allow more than one night for a task to be completed.

It is not our policy to set homestudy during a school holiday or to set 'extra work' if a holiday is taken during the school term time.

### 3. How will it be planned and co-ordinated?

#### Reading

Children *reading* to their parents and carers, children *reading* alone, children *reading with* their parents and carers, children *listening to* their parents and carers read or children *listening to taped books* are all enjoyable and vital activities.

A reading diary is given to every child in the school which enables the children to record books they have read and for parents and school staff to make comments. Guidelines for sharing books with children are given on the inside cover of the reading diary.

Since the advent of the National Literacy Strategy, the role of the parent in hearing individual reading is of paramount importance. It supplements and complements the work that is going on in school, in class or group lessons. It cannot be stressed enough that the individual time the parent/carer can give a child is vital.

As the children progress through the school and the text gets longer, children will want periods of reading alone in addition to practising reading aloud with expression. When this happens the role of the parent or carer changes. There is now a greater need for discussion about comprehension of the text.

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Spelling and tables revision will be encouraged. Children will need time at home to learn these and will often be tested in school. Other homestudy activities will be set on a regular basis to supplement the class teaching.

In all years homestudy tasks will be set on a Friday for returning on a Wednesday ready for marking/discussing. The school will supply each child with a homestudy folder.

Generally, homestudy each week will be:

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|----------------------|---|
| <b>Years 1 and 2</b> | Daily reading<br>Spellings<br>Other Literacy and Numeracy activities  |
| <b>Years 3 and 4</b> | Daily reading<br>Revision of tables/spellings<br>One activity/task selected from Literacy/Numeracy or topic                   |
| <b>Years 5 and 6</b> | Daily reading<br>Revision of tables/spellings as appropriate<br>Two activities/tasks selected from Literacy/Numeracy or topic |

### 4. Special Educational Needs

Although we accept that for some SEN children homestudy is not always easy we want them to do as much in common with other children as possible. We have high expectations of all our children at Summercroft and where appropriate will differentiate homestudy tasks so that neither too much nor too little is demanded of children and their parents/carers. Parents/carers of children with Individual Education plans will be made aware of the specific targets set for their children and will be asked to support these at home. These should take priority over other homestudy tasks which may have been set.

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### 5. The role of parents and carers in supporting pupils

We strongly believe that if parents/carers and teachers can work together on homestudy it will benefit all pupils learning. We are asking parents/carers to help and support their children in the on-going learning process.

In general terms we ask that parents and carers should:

- Provide a supportive environment in which the pupil can do their homestudy.
- Make it clear to pupils that they value homestudy and support the school in explaining how it can help their learning.
- Encourage pupils and praise them when they have completed homestudy.
- Help extend their child's reading by providing a range of fiction and non-fiction (including comics, magazines and newspapers) and encouraging them to use libraries.
- Make the most of television and other Information Technology, e.g. discussing major news stories. Talking about plot and character of appropriate television dramas.
- Play board games, e.g. monopoly, scrabble, boggle, hangman, ludo, dice games.
- Make the most of any visits/holidays by geographical/historical discussion, diary recording/making of scrap books, map reading and handling pocket money.

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### 6. Feedback for pupils, parents, carers and teachers

Where homestudy is reading, children should receive immediate feedback from parents or carers and comments in the reading diary will inform the class teacher.

In the case of work they do on their own, it is very important that they receive appropriate feedback from the teachers as soon as possible. This could take the form of discussion with the child/children following a class task. A written comment will not necessarily be given.

Other feedback may be made more public in the celebratory assembly on a Friday, through the award of stickers or through class display.

Homestudy activities often provide opportunities for children to develop a particular interest or to extend a field of learning. This is to be encouraged by both parent/carers and teachers.

Policy Prepared by: Teaching and Learning Committee

Policy Approved by Governing Body on .....

Signed: .....

Title: .....

Date: .....

Date of next Review: .....