

Homework Policy

Encouraging and fostering effective links between learning at school and at home is an effective way to support learning, encourage curiosity, embed skills and knowledge and develop lifelong learners.

At Barkisland, we facilitate this in a number of ways:

Talking Homework

From September 2019, following consultation with families, staff and the Governing Body, backed up by educational research from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), Talking Homework was introduced at Barkisland for children in Years 1-6.

The Education Endowment Foundation (2019) when thinking about formally completed homework activities states that “...pupils who do homework tend to be more successful, however it is not clear whether the use of homework is a reason for this success.” The research also goes on to state that “There is stronger evidence that it is helpful at secondary level, but there is much less evidence of benefit at primary level.”

Talking homework enables dialogue to be opened up more easily between children and their families.

Each class teacher will set 4 pieces of talking homework every Friday which will cover a variety of subjects and topic areas that your child has been learning about e.g.

Year 2	
PE	We have been learning to balance using 2 or 3 points of contact with the floor (a point of contact maybe a knee, elbow, hand, foot etc). How many different poses can your child (and you!) make. Maybe you could do this as a game of musical statues.
English	We have been studying poetry this week. Share together favourite poems – it may be tongue twisters, a song, a traditional poem or a rhyming story book. This is a great bedtime activity.
Science	We have been learning about food chains. Ask your child to tell you about one food chain e.g. grass is eaten by a rabbit who is eaten by a fox
Maths	We have been practising telling the time - o'clock, half past, quarter to and past. Can your child tell the times are certain points during the day/evening?

Each Friday, your child will bring home a sheet which details the Talking Homework (as above). These will also be placed on our website too, with a text reminder and link to access these (in case of lost/forgotten sheets).

There is no expectation at all that children will produce any evidence for this homework. All the homework is entirely verbal or practical. The emphasis should be that your child leads the conversation/activity which will support further consolidation of the learning in school that week. It may be that the talking homework opens up further opportunities to extend what has been learnt e.g. debating key ideas, extending knowledge or skills. The emphasis is on extending and consolidating through thinking and discussion, not being dependant on writing, recording, making or producing.

All activities should be no longer than 10 minutes, but families could extend learning if desired. It is hoped that this style of homework decreases the pressure on family time but facilitates families to extend learning beyond the classroom and raise the profile of learning differently.

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It is not expected that children will bring any evidence of their talking homework into school to be marked or awarded. However, if your child has extended their learning further, they are welcome to bring evidence in to show the teachers and other pupils, but by taking away the need to bring evidence of homework into school helps to support the idea that much learning can be done away from the classroom.

This should become part of natural family dialogue e.g. at mealtimes, bath time, bedtime, in the car or walking to school etc.

Key Benefits

- Encourages dialogue between children and families in ever increasing busy family lives.
- Reduces pressure on family time to find a slot to complete homework.
- Minimises pressure times between parents/carers and children when trying to encourage to complete homework.
- Supports children who find recording their work more challenging.
- Increases vocabulary for children – ‘A child’s vocabulary is a big predictor of future success.’
- Children don’t see it as homework and are glad to be able to engage with their families about their time at school.
- Parents/Carers have specific prompts to open up dialogue with their child/ren and find out more about their daily life in school and learning.

Reading

Reading is an expectation for all children at home. Research states that reading regularly has a direct impact on attainment and progress as well as having a positive impact on well-being.

‘Children who read for pleasure daily or nearly every day are a year ahead in reading performance versus those who never do.’ OECD (2010), PISA 2009 Results: Learning to Learn: Student Engagement, Strategies and Practices (Volume III)

‘If all Key Stage 2 children read for pleasure daily, 75% of them would reach the level at the end of primary school that predicts 5 or more passes at GCSE.’ Department for Education analysis 2015, in relation to Mullis, I.V.S., Martin, M.O., Foy, P., & Drucker, K.T. (2012). PIRLS 2011 international results in reading.

Children will have a home reading book from school that they can take home. This will be selected either from our wide range of books from reading schemes or from their class libraries when they become a more proficient and fluent reader (typically in Key Stage 2 – Years 3 and up). Teachers will expect that every child will read regularly at home. For younger children starting on their reading journey, this will be to an adult but will progress to reading independently as they become more fluent.

Children will also have opportunities to take books home from their class libraries to share and read at home.

If at any point, you are having difficulties in encouraging your child to read at home, please speak to your child’s class teacher for advice and support.

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Projects

Across the course of the year, children will be set two project style homework activities to complete.

The project can be completed in a variety of different ways which support individual children's areas of interest or expertise such as models, leaflets, artwork, baking, construction (Lego), ICT (PowerPoint Presentations, I-movies, scratch), games, music, poetry, drama etc. The opportunities are endless!

The dates for these projects will be set at the beginning of the year and communicated to families. Every effort will be made so that there is minimal overlap over year groups to support families of multiple children. This type of homework will have a minimum completion time of four weeks.

Projects will be celebrated in class and some children may even receive merit awards for their projects. We recognise that completing a project as a family is an extremely worthwhile learning experience and it is always lovely to see the team efforts that arrive in school.

Spellings

Pupils will learn new spelling rules in school each Friday. They will then have many opportunities to practise and apply these rules the following week, culminating in a spelling test on the Friday. Spelling lists are not sent home for children to practise; instead, at the beginning of the term, an overview of the spelling rules to be taught are shared with families.

This approach to learning spelling rules supports the long term learning of the rule, which can then be applied to other words, rather than learning a list of 10 words for a test.

Early Years Foundation Unit (EYFS)

Children in this unit within school, will not receive any formal homework activities. The curriculum newsletters sent home termly will support parents/carers in talking to their children about their learning in school alongside the school's twitter feed (@BarkiSchool) which is updated frequently.

Parents and carers can access their child's online learning journey (Learning Book) to view other learning taking place in school and are actively encouraged to upload activities and milestones completed at home onto the Learning Book platform.

Once children reach our Reception class within this unit, they will have reading activities to complete at home. This typically begins in October after they have started school in September. We hold a specific evening to explain how families can support reading at home.

Reading Suitcases

Our EYFS Team have introduced Reading Suitcases. These suitcases contain a book to share at home, a Reading Bear, two hot chocolate sachets and a book to leave a review. Each child should bring home the suitcase once each half term to share with their families at home.

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Year 1 Pupils

Our Year 1 pupils will still receive some Phonics specific homework to support this aspect of their learning.

Year 6 Pupils

Our Year 6 pupils will still receive formal homework each week as this is good preparation for secondary school.

For Key Stage 2 pupils (Years 3-6), we do hold a small stock of reasonably priced workbooks for families to purchase to support the application of reading skills, spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPAG) and maths. These are entirely optional and are available for parents/carers to purchase from the school shop in our online payment system should they wish to do so.

Absences due to an illness or medical condition

Where a child is absent from school for a short period of time due to illness (e.g. around a week), school will not set homework activities to complete as we would assume that the child is too ill to complete the work.

If a child is unable to attend school for a longer period of time due to a medical issue (e.g. more than 1 or 2 weeks), school will work with the family to provide work to be completed at home if this is deemed to be appropriate to the individual's needs.

If the time absent from school is likely to be extended (i.e. more than 15 days), the school, with consent from parents/carers, will complete a referral to Calderdale's Medical Needs Team who will provide education for the child in their home, hospital or within school.

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Absences due to term-time holidays

School will not routinely set or provide any homework for children who take time off school for family holidays.

Complied February 2020

Approved by the Governing Body February 2020

Review date - 3 years???