

WESTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

# Home and Family Learning Policy

*Review date:* November 2028

This Policy was written by Francesca McPhee

Reviewed February 2026





**Westfield**  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

**P**OSITIVITY  
**R**ESPECT  
**I**NDEPENDENCE  
**D**IVERSITY  
**E**XCELLENCE



The Department for Education trusts individual schools and leaders to set the policy and expectation for home learning for their school. They understand that it is not in anyone's best interest for children to be spending inordinate amounts of time doing home learning every night, and it is important children also get to do other things, such as playing outside, family time and eating together.

However, home learning is an integral part of learning, beyond the chance to practice and reinforce what has been learnt in class, it is also an opportunity to prepare for future learning, develop reading for pleasure, and help pupils develop independence and responsibility.

Good home learning policies focus on quality rather than quantity (avoiding excessive time requirements; the quality of the task is more important than the amount of time spent on it), making sure there is a clear purpose to any home learning set.

### **Westfield's Home and Family Learning Policy**

*We believe home learning consolidates and reinforces skills, knowledge, vocabulary and understanding in Mathematics and Literacy, helps raise the level of achievement of individual pupils, provides opportunities for parents and children to work together, whilst also developing independence and perseverance.*

*We value the support of parents/carers and work in partnership to ensure the best outcomes for the children.*

*We recognise that all children need leisure time and hope that our policy reflects a balance so children can extend and consolidate their learning with parental support, and independently, while still allowing 'down time'.*

### Introduction

At Westfield Primary school, we believe that support from home is an important aspect of a child's education. Primary School home learning is an opportunity for a shared family learning experience, which can inspire further learning and interest.

Our home learning is divided into **compulsory** and optional tasks to allow the flexibility to suit each family's circumstances.

**Compulsory home learning consists of the activities which we consider will have the maximum impact on children's learning;**

1. Reading.
2. Spelling.
3. Mathematics - time tables or practical activities

All other home learning will be optional.

### Aims:

#### **Home Learning should:**

- provide children with an opportunity to share their learning with their parents and/or other family members;
- motivate children to extend their learning and interests beyond the school day;
- promote independence and a Love of Learning to make children lifelong learners;
- allow parents, carers and the school to work in partnership for the benefit of their child;

- be an enjoyable, inspirational and stress-free experience for all concerned;
- develop reading for pleasure;
- focus on the basic skills of Reading, Writing and Mental Mathematics or application of mathematical knowledge and understanding.

### Reading

Daily reading is compulsory home learning for all children in the school. This reflects our belief that reading is of fundamental importance to a child's education and our desire to promote a *love of reading* in every child. This reading session should be more than just reading the print. We *encourage* parents and carers to share the books with their child, discussing and questioning at a level appropriate for their age and stage of development. Guidance is provided for the parents/carers of each child. As children develop, their daily reading experience will be different, but will always include an element of shared experience with an adult to ensure that there is understanding of their book as well as accurate reading. This may include a book sent home from school or a book of their choice from home.

### Spelling and Phonics

Spelling is a compulsory part of our home learning for every child and we expect them to be **practised at least 5 times a week for a short, sharp burst of time.** Every child in the school receives spelling/phonics for them to learn. The words sent home will generally follow a particular spelling pattern, and also Year Group specific words, taken from the Statutory Word Lists.

In addition to this, spelling errors from each child's written work may be given to them if they continue to spell them incorrectly, thus ensuring that the words they are learning are both relevant and necessary. Therefore, the number and competency of words given may vary depending on the needs of the child.

When children enter the school in Reception, our first aim is to teach them the sounds and letters which will enable them to read effectively. Thus, each child will be provided with a phonics book, with the key sounds to learn to recognise, read and write independently; daily RWI links are

sent home during the first half term to practice and after that as needed. Once the children understand the concept of blending we send home reading books that are carefully selected and match their phonics knowledge and ability. Writing is encouraged to be practised hand in hand as the children practise and build their reading skills. KS1 children have access to Reading Eggs - an app that supports their phonics learning - which can be accessed at home.

### Mental Mathematics Facts and Mathematics home learning

Each child in the school will have Mental Maths home learning appropriate to their individual needs, this may be practical tasks (lower down the school) or times tables practice (e.g. via TT Rockstars / Seesaw). In Reception, this is likely to involve counting objects, moving on to number bonds and then the early stage of multiplication as children progress. Daily practice of these facts can enhance children's mathematical ability and increase their speed and accuracy in other areas of Maths work. Any pictures/ photos can be sent to class teachers via Seesaw if parents wish to share home learning.

As children progress through the school, the home learning may consolidate class work with written activities, word problems or problem-solving activities, enabling pupils to apply their mental maths facts, as optional or compulsory home learning.

### Non-completion of Compulsory home learning

We hope that parents will recognise the importance of these home learning tasks and will support their child by finding regular time in their daily routine to complete these activities. Where parents are unable or unwilling to support their child with daily home learning at home, we will endeavour to provide time within the school day for those children, so that they are not put at a disadvantage. Due to timetable constrictions, this is likely to be during their break or lunchtime.

We hope that parents/carers will understand the benefit of these short, compulsory home learning tasks and appreciate the balance the school has aimed for between compulsory and optional learning tasks.

### Optional home learning/ Family Learning Sheets

Each term or half-term, the class teacher will send home a topic web, outlining all the areas they intend to cover with the class during that topic. Along with this, they will send home a family learning sheet ('Optional home learning tasks'), connected to the work being covered. This will provide ideas for a variety of cross-curricular, practical home learning activities, ranging from suggested places to visit and Art/D.T. projects to ideas for extending the Mathematics and Literacy work being learned. These activities can be undertaken at a time to suit the family and children can choose from the list whenever they wish to engage in a home learning activity.

Again, the focus here is on Family Learning time and our aim is to provide ideas for quality educational experiences that can be enjoyed by all. For our younger children, the experiences are likely to be 'play based' and will provide a wealth of opportunities for parents and carers to develop essential language skills. Optional home learning completed can be shared with the class teacher, through physically showing the teacher or letting the teacher know they have uploaded it virtually via Seesaw.

From time to time, teachers may add suggestions to the optional list, perhaps in response to something which was discussed in class, or from an idea provided by a child or parent. In these circumstances, the teacher will provide the additional tasks on Seesaw. There may also be occasional additional learning tasks set, such as a written comprehension task or maths activity, these should be brought back into school or uploaded to Seesaw when/if completed.

### Generative artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Copilot. At Westfield we recognise that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also lend itself to cheating, 'cutting corners' and plagiarism.

Pupils may use AI tools as a research tool to help them find out about new topics and ideas.

Pupils may not use AI tools:

- During assessments
- To write their home learning or class assignments, where AI-generated text is presented as their own work

## The School Website

Each class has a class page which has useful information for parents. To further support our children's learning, links are provided on our school website to other appropriate resources, such as links to websites and other activities.

## Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

All children will have access to home learning that is relevant to their current age and stage of development. In addition, we aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background. The flexibility of our home learning programme takes account of individual needs and of children's other interests and commitments outside of school.

## **The type and amount of home learning which is appropriate for pupils of different ages**

The recommended time allocation for home learning is set out below. These are broad expectations and provide a framework for teachers, pupils and parents/carers, whilst also keeping in mind the focus on quality rather than quantity.

All timings below are approximate, remembering the focus should be on quality rather than quantity.

Compulsory		
Year R	10 mins per night	Share a book to encourage daily reading (Autumn 1 ongoing) Phonic focus (Autumn 1 & 2) A weekly reading book to practise orally blending using Fred talk and then blending independently using Fred talk.  Practical Maths activity focus (Autumn 2 ongoing)
Years 1 and 2	20 mins a day (rotating between spelling / phonics and tables/ number bonds)  1 x maths activity per week (20 mins).	Reading (10 mins) and regular Spelling linked to phonics (set weekly to be practiced at home regularly in small amounts of time e.g. 10 mins) *  Practical Maths activity linked to current term's learning.
Year 3	20- 30 mins daily	Reading and spellings daily
Year 4	20 - 30 mins daily (min)	Tables daily.
Years 5  Year 6	Up to 45 mins daily min	Reading (20 minutes), spelling and times tables at least 5 times a week

**Independent, optional family learning work** - this is set  $\frac{1}{2}$  termly or termly with an opportunity to share the outcomes with the whole class.

**Consideration for special needs and equal opportunities**

1. Some children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may benefit from special tasks separate from the home learning set for other children in the class.

2. It is important that they should do as much in common with other children as possible.
3. When setting home learning for SEND children they may be helped through scaffolding, e.g. a specialised frame for the children to work to, typed or written instructions and enlarged sheets etc.
4. Use of a child's Provision Map in setting home learning should be taken into consideration
5. home learning should be made accessible and relevant to all children regardless of ability, faith or creed.

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

#### **Parents and carers should be encouraged to:**

1. Provide a reasonably peaceful, suitable place in which pupils can do their home learning - alone or, more often for younger children, together with an adult.
2. Make it clear to their children that they value home learning and support the school in explaining how it can help their learning.
3. Encourage pupils and praise them when they have completed home learning.
4. Keep to a routine.
5. Ask their child to explain what the home learning is that they have to do.
6. Use the home learning diary/ reading record to build up a home/school partnership. Parents and teachers can use it to write comments.
7. **Become actively involved in joint home learning activities with children. These may include -**
  - ✓ Listening to their child's ideas and allow them plenty of time to talk. This allows the child to think through ideas and problems and often solves concerns they may have.
  - ✓ Question the child about the home learning instead of providing answers.
  - ✓ Provide challenges
  - ✓ Talk through ideas and explain concepts.
  - ✓ Give examples and suggestions.
  - ✓ Set aside time to work together.

### **Information and feedback for pupils, parents or carers and teachers**

In addition to the after school welcome meeting to prepare for the new academic year and the topic web (at the start of each new topic), which will be both applicable to Early Years/ KS1 and KS2, there will be differing arrangements for providing information and giving feedback to parents over the three key stages.

- Welcome meetings in the summer term before the new academic year explains how home learning will be set, including the optional home learning (family learning sheets and occasional written tasks) and what feedback can be expected.
- Topic webs at the start of each term/topic.
- A timetable indicating what home learning will be set and when it needs to be completed by. It will also indicate a recommended amount of time to do it in.
- Curricular workshops and presentation evenings will happen regularly to keep parents informed e.g. ICT/ Times tables/Reading/Phonics.
- All teachers are available to discuss matters with parents after school, at a mutually convenient time.