The Shropshire Hills Federation

Home Learning Policy

Covid 19 period – please read the additional paragraph at the end of this policy, which refers to home learning during this period.

At Shropshire Hills Federation we believe that education is most successful when teachers, pupils, parents and carers all share the responsibility for children's learning, and home learning plays an important role in this. Where home learning is embraced and supported by all, it helps to foster a positive attitude to learning and encourages children and families to recognise that learning continues beyond the school gates. Home learning is also a valuable method of communication between home and school, where any concerns about academic progress or attitudes to learning can be better understood and addressed.

We believe that home learning begins as soon as children enter school in The Foundation Stage, and continues and evolves throughout a child's primary education. By the time a child leaves us at the end of Year 6, we expect them to have a positive approach to home learning and recognise that it is a valuable and important part of their learning. We aim to ensure that children are ready for the expectations and rigour of home learning during their secondary education and beyond.

The home learning that we provide should:

- Be an integral part of a child's everyday learning.
- Be purposeful and linked directly to their class-based learning where possible.
- Be enjoyable and varied to encourage active participation by children and families.
- Be set, giving sufficient time and adequate resources for all to complete equally.
- Ensure that no child is discriminated against through lack of resources or support.
- Ensure that no child is disadvantaged in any way, including lack of participation from home.
- Always be set with the child's capabilities in mind and differentiated if required.
- Supported by parents and carers, but not completed by them. We should encourage parents to understand that it is perfectly okay and expected for children to get things wrong during home learning, but to simply try their best. In school we encourage children to embrace errors as an important part of learning and we should aim to develop this also in home learning.
- Support parents, where needed, to make home learning a positive experience for all concerned.
- Wherever possible, ensure that staff members can support children to complete unfinished or missed home learning in school, at an appropriate time, ensuring that this work does not negatively impact upon their class-based learning.

Home learning will vary from class to class and throughout the school year to reflect children's age, ability and other factors. However, as a guide, it will progress as below:

- **Foundation Stage** – When deemed ready by the teacher, picture books will be sent home and other resources for story telling provided for parents to share with their children. A limited amount of creative tasks may also be set. Phonics based reading books will be sent home as appropriate. Children will be encouraged to share stories and develop early reading skills every day.
- **Keystage One** – Phonics based reading books will be sent home, along with other reading resources as determined by the class teacher. Children will be encouraged to read to parents or other adults every day. Weekly spellings will be set, along with basic maths tasks such as beginning to learn number bonds and times tables. Other creative or topic based tasks may be introduced on a limited basis.
- **Years 3/4** – Children will develop a greater self-choice of reading materials of all genres. They will be encouraged to continue to read to parents or other adults every day. Weekly spelling will continue and develop so that children not only learn the spelling patterns that are being taught within the class, but also begin to be responsible for collecting their own spellings to practise at home. These will be taken from corrected errors within their classwork, or from the list of frequently misspelt words provided by the teacher. By the end of Year 4, children are expected to be fluent with times tables up to 12 X 12. Children will be expected to practise these at home, using a variety

of methods. Online programmes such as Time Tables Rockstars may be used as home learning, but care should be taken by class teachers not to disadvantage any children who may have limited access to technology at home. This should be considered when setting any home learning involving ICT. Teachers may begin to increase the complexity and frequency of topic based and research projects, to develop children's independence in home learning.

- **Years 5/6** – During upper Keystage 2, home learning develops further; the amount, frequency and types of home learning will continue as in Years 3/4. During Year 6, the type of homework will begin to focus more on individual subjects, as it would at secondary school. This will be used as a transition period so that children begin to understand that homework may be set on any day of the week, and that it may be required back to the teacher on any day of the week. During the spring term of Year 6, home learning will focus on preparation for SATs and transition to secondary school.

We recognise that families may have very different opinions about home learning at primary school. When we have surveyed this during parental questionnaires, responses have shown that approximately one third think we set the correct amount, one third think we set too much and one third think we set too little. We believe that is vital that all children have equal access to learning and that no child should be disadvantaged. We also believe that as children progress into keystage 2, each child should begin to take responsibility for completion of home learning on time and to a high standard, to the best of their ability. All home learning should be able to be completed without an adult at home guiding them so that no one is disadvantaged, although parental engagement should still be encouraged.

Where a child does not complete homework at home, during the time allowed, school will make provision for completion to be supported within school. **This should <u>never</u> be seen as a punishment for non-completion, but as recognition that home learning is <u>important</u> and that no child should fall behind his/her peers because of lack of engagement by either the child or parents.** Where this takes place, it should always be carried out in a supportive manner and time should be taken to help the child to develop strategies for greater independence in the future. It will be up to individual class teachers when and how this takes place. However, in most cases, this will need to be during free time either before lessons begin in school, or during some periods of free time during the day. Completion of home learning in school must not have a negative impact upon class-based learning.

Where homework is missed occasionally, teachers will simply find an appropriate time for children to complete their learning either independently, or with support from an adult if appropriate. Teachers will discuss strategies with the child to enable them to take responsibility for remembering to complete home learning on time. No further action is required by teachers in this instance. If the problem persists for three consecutive weeks, a text message will be sent to parents using the automated system to alert them to the concern. Should homework not be handed in on **five occasions in one term**, the class teacher will arrange for a phone call to be made to the parents. This will either be by the class teacher themselves, or should that not be possible due to workload or needing to be in class at times when parents are available, by the head teacher. After a conversation with parents, if home learning is still not completed, the class teacher will organise a regular time during the week, so that the child can complete the work with the support of a member of staff.

It remains important that we ensure that this is shown by staff members as support for the child's education and well-being and never as a punishment. Objection to the principle of homework cannot be a reason for non-compliance, as this is the policy of the school. However, teachers should always take into account the child's age, level of support that is available at home, and special educational needs when dealing with home learning concerns.

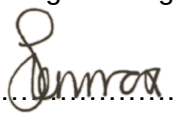
Home learning should be a positive experience for children and adults. Careful planning by teachers will enable this and wherever possible tasks should be creative and varied. Home learning should promote life-long learning and develop an understanding that while much of our learning takes place in the classroom, often some of the best and most varied takes place elsewhere.

Covid 19 Related Additions

For some children, during the Covid 19 period, remote learning (at home) becomes an essential part their education. Our Federation will do everything possible to make remote learning as close to a classroom experience as possible. The key features of our remote learning offer are as follows:

- Unless a child is actually ill, whenever they are at home due to any Covid related reason, we expect him/her to engage in full time learning from the first day of absence.
- It is a legal obligation for the Federation to provide remote learning, and for parents to ensure that it is completed as specified.
- The Federation recognises that during any of these periods, parents will be facing many challenges and we will work with families to support them wherever we can.
- We will provide 5.5 hours of work each day, across the whole curriculum and it is expected that this will be completed to the child's best ability and must be the child's own work. Work will need to be returned for feedback at the teacher's discretion and the school will agree a method and timeframe for this. This needs to be as easy as possible and be organised by the child (wherever possible).
- All resources will be provided (physical and online).
- Where individuals are isolating, a private channel on Teams will be set up for each child, the class teacher and the headteacher. Confidential feedback can be given on this channel.
- Each teacher will provide a generic first 24 hours plan online, on Teams, to be accessed at short notice to enable immediate learning for every child.
- Within the first 24 hours, the family should be contacted by the class teacher or the head teacher so that we can check that access to learning is good.
- Each class teacher will publish their weekly timetable on Teams so that parents/carers can check and support when children should be engaged.
- Each class teacher will have a webcam operating in their class so that children at home feel part of the class and can benefit from direct teaching for as many lessons as possible. **Care must be taken to protect any confidentialities from within the classroom and particular attention must be paid to LAC and others whose identities must be protected.**
- Children working from home due to Covid isolation will be required to log on to their virtual classes at the times set by the class teacher. They are expected to join at registration time (8:55 am) so that registration marks can be applied correctly and teacher can check that children know the expectations of the day.
- Where the time absent from school extends beyond 14 days, a formal agreement will be set up between school and home to cover all aspects. Such agreements will only be made in very exceptional circumstances and in association with the Local Authority Inclusion Department and Education Welfare Officer.

Adopted by the governing body:

Signed……  ……..Date17/11/2020…….

Position…Chair of Governors……..

To be reviewed by……November 2022…….