



Home Learning
Guidance for Parents



Home Learning at Newton Longville CoE Primary School

Home Learning is any work, activity or experiences which children are asked to do outside of school time, either on their own or with their parents or carers. Learning at home is an essential part of a good education to reinforce learning which has taken place in school and to develop the skills and attitudes of independent study in readiness for lifelong learning. If home learning is effective, it also opens another channel of home-school communication and greater opportunities for home-school partnership which is a very important tool for promoting children's learning.

The Home Learning programme at Newton Longville School is seen as part of the overall strategy of raising standards and making the best of children's learning.



The focus on Essential Skills

Home Learning throughout the school has an emphasis on the basic skills of English and mathematics, primarily focused on the development of reading, handwriting, spelling and calculation skills.

Personalising Home Learning

The school is committed to ensuring that all Home Learning set is appropriate to the differing needs of the children. Children with special educational needs may occasionally benefit from being given work which is different from that which is given to the rest of the class or group. If this is the case, they are not expected to complete work set for the rest of the class in addition to their individually differentiated task.

Home Learning expectations – balancing work and play

As a school, we recognise the importance of family time and the need for children to participate in a range of activities outside school. We consider that the amount of time spent on Home Learning should not be excessive and should be proportionate to the age of the pupil.

Whilst pupils are not expected to complete Home Learning activities during the holiday periods, we would request that parents continue to encourage their children to read regularly for pleasure from a wide variety of reading materials.

Home learning expectations in all year groups

Pupils are expected to complete the following activities on a **daily** basis:

- Reading to an adult from either their school reading book or a book from home and completing the Reading Record;
- Learning 'Key Instant Recall Facts' and multiplication tables

Pupils are expected to complete the following activities on a **weekly** basis:

- A maths activity developing key learning skills taught in class
- A grammar activity practising key learning skills taught in class
- KS2 will also have a reading comprehension task to complete.

Additional activities

Pupils will also be encouraged to complete specific activities to consolidate and extend curricular learning, encourage and develop independent learning skills. These activities may involve:

Researching a topic or finding out information

Reading in preparation for lessons

Preparing oral presentations

Completing written pieces of work

Investigating mathematical problems

Revision for Key Stage 2 SATs tests (Year 6 only)

These activities become compulsory in Upper Key Stage 2 (year 5 and 6) in preparation for Secondary School

English Basic Skills

Reading

The importance of reading at home cannot be over-emphasised and we hope that pupils will read for pleasure in their own time. Reading widely and regularly fuels children's imaginations develops knowledge and understanding and also models styles of sentence structures and features which children can then use in their own writing.

Pupils will be provided with a school reading book, matched to their ability, which will be taken home to read with a parent/carer or another adult. A reading record is provided for parents to sign and make comments in when they have listened to their child read and this will be monitored regularly by the class teacher.

How to help your child develop their reading skills

- Let your child see you reading.
- Share books together at bedtime or any other time!
- Point out print and words that are all around us: street signs, labels, posters, newspapers, etc.
- Show your child how to find things out by reading: TV programme guides, recipes, instruction manuals, advertising leaflets, etc.
- Praise your child's efforts so they become more confident.
- Take a look at www.familyreading.org.uk for practical help and tips
- Join the local library!



Ways to enjoy a book together

- Discuss what may happen next in the story.
- Show your child how to bring stories to life with lots of expression and silly voices.
- Check your child understands what they are reading by asking them to explain it in their own words.
- Talk about the cover and read the title, asking questions, such as: what do you think it will be about; what sort of book is it; have you read one like this before?
- Don't correct too quickly. If your child makes an error, suggest having another go, searching the pictures for a clue, sounding out the first letter or reading on before you 'tell' the problem word.
- As your child progresses, talk about authors, characters and plots or what new information has been learnt.

Spelling

Pupils will initially focus on a selection of spellings taken from the most common 200 words which appear in children's writing, including a range of both 'exception' words and those which follow spelling rules.

As pupils progress through the school, they will be given additional challenging words to learn, many of which come from the statutory spelling requirements of the National Curriculum.

These spellings will be sent home at the beginning of the year for children to practise with their parents. Class teachers will periodically test children on these key words and ensure that children are spelling them correctly in their everyday writing.

Ways to practise spellings

- Look, cover, write, check: Look at the spelling word. Cover the word and attempt to write it. Check if it is correct if not, rewrite the word again correctly.
- Shaving Cream Practice: Squirt some shaving cream/gel on a wipe-able flat surface such as a work top or tray and then practise spelling the words by writing them with fingers in the shaving cream. This is also great fun in the bathroom using the tiles when having a bath.
- Salt/Sand Box Spelling: Pour salt or sand into a shallow box or tray (about 3cm deep) and then practise writing spellings in it with a finger.
- Scrabble Spelling: Find the letters needed to spell the words and then mix them up in the bag. Get your parents to time you unscrambling the letters to spell the word.
- Simple Sentence: Write a sentence for each of the words. Remember each sentence must start with a capital letter and end with a full stop.
- Colourful Words: Use two different coloured pens to write the words. One to write the vowels and one to write the consonants. Do this a few times, then write the whole word in one colour.
- Memory Game: Make pairs of word cards with the spellings on. Turn them all over and mix them up. Flip over two cards, if they match you get to keep them, if not you have to turn them over again. Try and match all the pairs.
- iPad Writing: Write the words on an iPad or tablet using apps like Doodle Buddy.
- Post in Notes: Write the spelling words on post it notes and sticks them around the house or bedroom and spell them aloud whenever they are seen.

Handwriting

It is important that children can communicate and express their thoughts and ideas in writing which is easy and pleasurable for others to read. At Newton Longville we are developing the use of a cursive handwriting script. Pupils should, therefore, practise their handwriting, joining letters when appropriate and developing a neat, flowing and regular script. Activities and modelled examples can be found on www.letterjoin.co.uk

Ways to practise handwriting

- Give them a special notebook and pen (just for handwriting) which must be kept neat.
- Involve your child in writing – cards, shopping lists, notes, thank you letters, etc.
- Some children like to keep a diary; writing a paragraph a day.
- Create a homemade book on a theme which your child loves, such as football, dancing, pets, TV programmes, etc – anything which will give them plenty to write about!
- Ensure your child sits correctly to write with a table and chair at a comfortable height.

Mathematics

At Newton Longville we want all our pupils to become confident and competent mathematicians who are fluent in the key skills of mathematics before they move onto solving more complex and sophisticated problems. It is essential that they have secure number sense and mathematical fluency so pupils in all year groups will be given mental maths activities to practice at home on a regular basis.

So what is number sense and mathematical fluency?

By regularly practising Key Instant Recall Facts and Timetables, children gain secure number sense by developing an understanding of what numbers mean and their relationship to one another. Children will also be able to perform mental calculations, understand symbolic representations, and use those numbers in real world situations with flexibility. We want the children to have computational fluency and be able to work efficiently so that they can draw on key mathematical knowledge such as number facts, doubles, related multiplication and division facts and not spend time working out calculations which should be quick or become 'bogged down' with multiple steps when problem-solving. This also supports knowledge of the relationships between numbers and their operations so children can work with increasing accuracy, drawing on alternative strategies to check their answers. Finally, it helps children to know 'the why and the how' rather than just rote learning of information which can be easily forgotten.



What are Key Instant Recall Facts (KIRFs)?

Our regular Home Learning will be centred on the children's learning of Key Instant Recall Facts, which are year group specific and become increasingly harder each year. KIRFs are designed to support the development of the mental skills that underpin much of what we teach daily at Newton Longville and are particularly useful when calculating; be it adding, subtracting, multiplying or dividing. They are the 'basic mathematical mechanics' such as number bonds, multiplication facts and associated division facts, fact families, doubles, halves and prime numbers, which the children can draw on quickly and instantly, allowing for efficient and accurate problem solving and which form part of their integral mathematical knowledge. KIRFs should be practised frequently in order to become embedded in children's mathematical practice.

It is important to add that not all children progress at the same rate and some children might need to practise some KIRFs from the previous year group.

How you can support your child's mathematical skills and knowledge

Mathematics is all around us; literally, everywhere we look, a discussion could turn to mathematics! From a door frame to the soil in a plant pot, nearly everything in our lives around us is underpinned by mathematics. Outside the classroom, in your home, on journeys, during the holidays and even shopping, there are multiple opportunities to develop your child's maths skills. So here are just a few fun suggestions for activities which could be completed in addition to the daily practice of KIRFs:

- Show children how maths is very much a part of everyday life – lead by example. Spend time discussing mathematical decisions with your children such “This trip to the cinema costs £20.00, what else could we spend the money on?”
- Engage in lots of practical maths activities such as cooking where there are multiple possibilities such as measuring, ratio, proportion and fractions along with cooking time and temperature.
- Look for opportunities to discuss maths when shopping. Talk about the special offers that shops use and consider whether a “2 for the price of 1” really is better value. How much off is 20%? Are shops' own brands always cheaper than named brands?
- Discuss time regularly with your children. Ask them to use the skills of estimating how long a task might take such as hanging out the washing or picking up toys left on the floor! Discuss how long it is until bedtime and if they stayed up late every night, how much sleep would they miss out on!
- Playing games! Not only do games assist mathematical thinking, but they are also fun ways to spend time together. There are many games, such as Snakes and Ladders, Battleships and Chess which really boost maths skills.
- Find time for some puzzle activities. Rubik cubes and similar activities support logical thinking and persistence: key skills for mathematicians.
- Enjoy maths through stories and reading. Not only will this support their literacy skills, but will continue to develop their maths skills also.