



Wardie Primary School

Home Learning Position Paper

Created May 2023

1. School Vision

Wardie recognises and values the contribution that every family makes to their child's learning and progress. A child's first and most important teacher is their parent, carer and extended family around them. This position paper aims to set out Wardie's vision for continuing positive family/school relationships. We hope to raise confidence in families and allow involvement in children's learning and development. Research shows that this participation is a key factor in raising ambition, aspirations and achievements for all learners.

2. Scope of policy

This policy was developed following a school community consultation in March 2023. Children, families and staff were involved. Research, Government and City of Edinburgh Council policy was also used. Our position paper was influenced by the following factors.

- i. There is little research evidence showing a positive impact of home learning on attainment in the primary school years.
- ii. Many of our children attend after-school clubs however approx. 90% of families state they feel home learning could be beneficial for their child.
- iii. Home learning is most beneficial when it is presented as short, regular, focused, varied and interesting tasks. Routine homework (repetitive tasks such as practising spelling lists) is not effective.
- iv. The purpose of home learning set by school is not to "occupy" children at home but rather to consolidate the knowledge and/or skills taught in class and engage families with the work being carried out in school.

3. Definition of Home Learning Home

From the moment they are born, children begin to absorb information and make sense of their world. As well as providing the basics for growth and development: food, comfort and security, parents/carers also provide stimulation through everyday activities such as games, rhymes and language that help a child to learn. Many of these activities are part of everyday life - preparing and eating meals together, doing the washing, shopping, watching TV, visiting friends and families – but for young children they are opportunities for discovery and learning. However, once children start more formal education it's not always easy for parents to know how best to help their child. As children grow older it is easy to forget the strong influence that the home and the community still have on their learning, especially as children only spend 15% of their time in school.

(Engaging Parents and Families, Section 2: Learning at Home, Education Scotland)

Providing opportunities, supporting and building capacity amongst Scotland's parents to capitalise on children's learning experiences is key in raising attainment and closing the poverty related attainment gap. Parents have an important role to play in helping their child's learning and development at home but also in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings, schools and the wider community. Research evidence shows that when 'parents, carers and other family members are effectively involved in their children's education, the outcome for their children is better'

(Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act Guidance, 2006, pi).

Learning refers to learning activities which children undertake at home. Some home learning activities may be set by school, many will be set by parents. It should be relevant and achievable for all learners. Home Learning will offer families the opportunity to experience learning together. Credence must also be taken of the excellent learning many of our pupils already undertake through extra-curricular clubs and activities. These require the investment of time, determination and commitment to achieve, and this should be shared, celebrated and included under the umbrella of 'home learning'.

4. The purpose of Home Learning

Home learning set by school will

- (a) Consolidate skills and/or knowledge which have been covered in class
- (b) Establish a habit of home learning and independence in learning
- (c) Let parents see where their child "is at" in their learning – in addition to existing reporting processes – Learning Journals, Parents' Nights, shared learning experiences etc.

5. Best activities for promoting achievement

Research suggests that the most effective types of home learning are:

- (a) Reading: encourage children to read books of their own choice. Children are encouraged to borrow books from the school library and local community library. Children will also have access to a "reading group" book.
- (b) Relationships: spend time as a family doing activities you enjoy, especially activities which support good health and wellbeing.
- (c) Parents having a good awareness of where their child's learning "is at" and supporting where required e.g. discuss learning that children have taken part in, attend school consultation meetings, open classroom events, information evenings and performances.

6. Not Mandatory

Home Learning will be offered to all children and families can choose whether this is completed or not. Home learning tasks are not mandatory. We ask that families discuss this and agree with children whether home learning takes place or not. We would encourage families and children to take part in reading home learning as research has shown this to be fundamentally important to a child's likely success in school and in later life. *On occasion, teachers will create opportunities for home learning that exist out-with the grids such as to practise a Scots Poem or research a topic. Again, these are not mandatory tasks.*

7. Home learning grids

Home Learning suggested activities will be presented on a grid for cross curricular skills and as a task map (similar to a grid) for reading. These will be sent home termly, to consolidate the learning from the previous term. Numeracy will be assigned fortnightly on the learning platform which will be shared with children and families at the beginning of each academic year.

8. Home Learning duration

Home learning should last approximately 15-20 minutes per night for P1-2 and 20-30 minutes per night for P4-7 based on the feedback from children, families and staff. Some suggested family activities may take longer. If the task is taking too long, please stop and either come back to it at different time or leave it as unfinished.

9. Marking

Home learning will not be marked but opportunities may be offered for sharing completed tasks with peers and staff. Children who have not completed school suggested home learning are welcome to bring in something they have done at home (e.g. describing an out of school activity).

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