



The Iffley Academy

Home Learning Policy

Reviewed November 2014

Date of next review November 2017

Signed: Head of Establishment

Chair of Governors

Rationale

At The Iffley Academy we recognise the value in the learning that can take place outside of school and use the phrase 'Home Learning' rather than 'Homework'.

Home learning is anything that our pupils do outside the normal school day that contributes to their learning in response to guidance from the school. Home learning can encompass a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents/carers to support pupils' learning.

The Iffley Academy believes that homework opportunities need to be relevant to the individual needs of each pupil.

We recognise that our pupils benefit from the mutual support of parents/carers and teachers in encouraging them to learn both at home and at school. In addition to the home-school link books, email or telephone communication system, home learning can be an important way of further developing a successful dialogue between home and school. Home learning also supports independent learning.

Whilst home learning is of great value, we acknowledge the important role of play and free time in a child's growth and development. Therefore it should not prevent our pupils from taking part in after school clubs and organisations that are key in helping the development of social independence.

The Iffley Academy recognises that home learning may cause anxiety for some of our pupils. Therefore, teachers liaise with parents/carers when setting tasks to be completed at home. We welcome feedback from home via parents' evenings, annual reviews, post admissions meetings and the home-school diary/email system.

This policy is therefore designed to be flexible and not a meaningless chore for pupils, parents/carers or teachers.

Aims and objectives

- To enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development
- To help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner and take ownership of their own learning
- To promote a partnership between home and school in supporting every child's learning
- To help pupils develop good work habits for the future
- To allow pupils the opportunity to develop their own interests
- To revisit and consolidate learning in the classroom

Practice

- Any homework that is given must be of value to each individual pupil.
- Our pupils work hard during the school day; so work of an academic nature may not always be appropriate and homework may take on a variety of forms.
- Homework should not cause undue stress on the pupil, parent/carer or teacher.
- Teachers, in consultation with parents/carers, are happy to discuss the type of activities that would be the most beneficial, but there will be no formal marking of the completed work.
- Sometimes a pupil may be requested to complete unfinished class work at home, but this is only in agreement with pupil, parent/carer and teacher.
- There are opportunities for a pupil's SMSC and Speaking and Listening IEP targets to be linked to home learning activities.

Types of home learning

We aim for the selection of tasks set to be interactive and engaging in order to support parents/carers in encouraging their child to complete the tasks at home.

Some examples are below:

- Maths Active Learn website can be accessed from home
- 6th form pupils are encouraged to complete their work experience booklets
- Working from a range of recommended websites to support exam preparation in KS4 and KS5
- Practice Functional Skills papers in English and Maths
- 'First News' comprehension tasks
- A range of discussion tasks to share with parents, carers, siblings, etc.

Specific home learning case studies are currently being piloted in 3 Key Stage 3 classes:

Case study 1 (1 class)

Development of independent learning and presentation skills

Homework is set on a Friday and the pupils have to find one fact on a topic of their choice. The fact may be presented in any way of the pupil's choosing – drawings, written work, cooking, etc. During the following week the pupils are encouraged to take part in a speaking and listening session where each fact is shared and the other pupils answer questions on the presentations. This is proving to be a very engaging homework with all pupils enthusiastically taking part.

It is envisaged that this homework opportunity will be rolled out to all KS3 classes.

Case study 2 (two classes)

Promotion of conversation and planning and organising the pupil's day

All pupils have individualised conversation books clearly stating their name and displaying their personalised timetable. The expectation is that each pupil plans their day in advance using the timetable and therefore can think through the learning journey and have time to process any concerns in advance. This is more often than not completed at home with a parent or carer, however if it has not been completed, there is time to do so at the start of the day.

We have seen excellent results from the planning, with all students being able to remember their timetable, feeling secure around what is happening now and next and being able to start to take responsibility for equipment such as PE kits.

The second part of the conversation book is the communication between school and home. This takes place by the school adults writing a question in the book for the students to answer at home. It is normally a simple question about an activity that happened during the day that is designed to promote conversation eg. why did you have to get up in assembly?. In turn the adults at home can also write a question which promotes conversation about what has happened at home eg. who came over last night?

Again we have seen success with this element of the conversation books specifically supporting students with speech and language/communication difficulties.

This model has been adapted from good practice that has been researched through other specialist provision and in collaboration with the autism support service. The suggested types of questions are listed in Appendix 1.

Monitoring

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for monitoring the Home Learning policy. The team is also responsible for supporting colleagues in setting home learning and for providing strategic lead and direction for the area in the school.

The policy will be reviewed in consultation with pupils, staff and the Teaching and Learning committee.

Equal Opportunities

The directors, governors and staff are committed to providing the full range of opportunities for all pupils, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, social, cultural or religious background. All pupils have access to the curriculum, and the right to a learning environment, which dispels ignorance, prejudice or stereotyping

Appendix 1

Exemplar questions for communication homework

• Level 1

Your child has been assessed with the TALC (Test of Abstract language Comprehension). This allows us to decide on what level of questions to use in the interactive diary. Your child needs questions which are at the equivalent of Level 1 of TALC. These are the kinds of questions which we need to use in the diary, so please try to include questions such as the following;

Where is?

What is?

What did you see/hear/do..?

Show ... to me

• Level 2

Your child has been assessed with the TALC (Test of Abstract language Comprehension). This allows us to decide on what level of questions to use in the interactive diary. Your child needs questions which are at the equivalent of Level 2 of TALC. These are the kinds of questions which we need to use in the diary, so please include questions such as the following;

Say what something does (*What do you cut/paint/play with?*)

Finish a sentence (*Socks go on your ...?*)

Give other examples (*What else moves?/What else can you wear?/What is different to/the same as...?*)

Describe basic details of events (*What happened in the party?*)

Who questions (*Who works in the garage?*)

Where questions (*Where does Mum shop?*)

What questions (*What do you put on your toast in the morning?*)

• Level 3

Your child has been assessed with the TALC (Test of Abstract language Comprehension). This allows us to decide on what level of questions to use in the interactive diary. Your child needs questions which are at the equivalent of Level 3 of TALC. These are the kinds of questions which we need to use in the diary, so please include questions such as the following;

Follow instructions (*Do this and then this*)

Give instructions (*Tell me how you make a cheese sandwich*)

Say how things are the same/different (*How are a lorry and a plane the same?/What is different about a cat and a dog?*)

Say what a word means (*What does 'party' mean?*)

Say what could happen next (*If people play with matches, what might happen?*)

Put yourself in another person's situation (*How does Mrs Roberts feel if children hit other children?*)

Tell a story while looking at a series of pictures/photos (*These are the photos of Grandma's party. Tell me what happened?*)

• Level 4

Your child has been assessed with the TALC (Test of Abstract language Comprehension). This allows us to decide on what level of questions to use in the interactive diary. Your child needs questions which are at the equivalent of Level 4 of TALC. These are the kinds of questions which we need to use in the diary, so please include questions such as the following;

Justify why something happens (*Why do you have to wear a seatbelt?*)

Justify a decision (*Why didn't you tidy your room?*)

Say what caused something to happen (*Why are there people in Japan without homes?*)

Solve a problem (*What would you do if you were in Asda and you lost your purse?*)

Work something out (*How do you know Uncle Harry is sad?*)

Explain why something can't happen (*Why can't we go swimming tomorrow?*)

Say why something is done (*Why do you have to wait in the queue?*)