

David Livingstone Memorial Primary School Homework Policy



October 2023

In David Livingstone Memorial Primary School, we want our pupils to develop the skills they need for lifelong learning and future success. Our vision is to provide an inclusive and nurturing environment where everyone can learn and grow.

Learning at home

'Learning at home is the learning which happens in the home, outdoors or in the community. It can take place through everyday activities that families already do and can overlap with aspects of organised or active learning activities'. (Scottish Parental Involvement Officers Network, 2018)

Learning at home can happen through a range of events including play, leisure activities (clubs), fun events, sports, trips, cultural or volunteering experiences and everyday family life. It can also happen through curriculum related activities, homework, reading and sharing books. Activities for learning at home can be specifically designed to enable parents to engage in their child's learning and build upon the learning from school.

Learning at home for David Livingstone Memorial Primary has traditionally taken the form of weekly written homework in the form of spelling, reading and Numeracy tasks, which pupils are expected to complete during the week, e.g., issued on a Monday and returned on a Friday.

During the period of 'Home Learning' in 2020-2021 we became acutely aware of the number of factors that impact the capacity for learning to be undertaken at home.

We recently consulted our school stakeholder groups on homework in order to better understand its purpose and plan for future provision.

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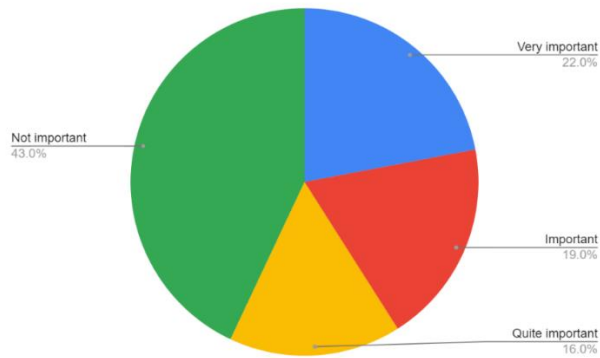
Homework Survey

Our recent survey produced the following results:

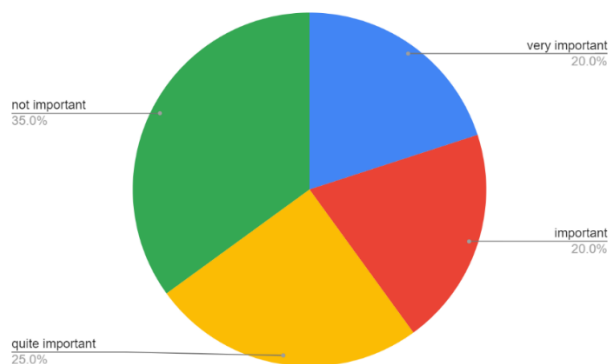


How important do you think homework is?

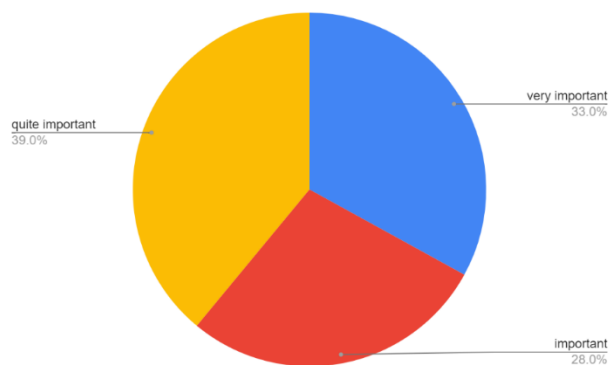
Pupils:



Parents/Carers:



Staff:



Respect

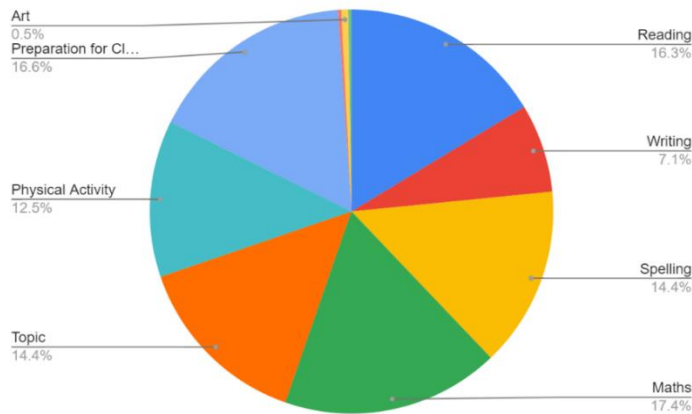
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What types of homework do you feel are most beneficial?

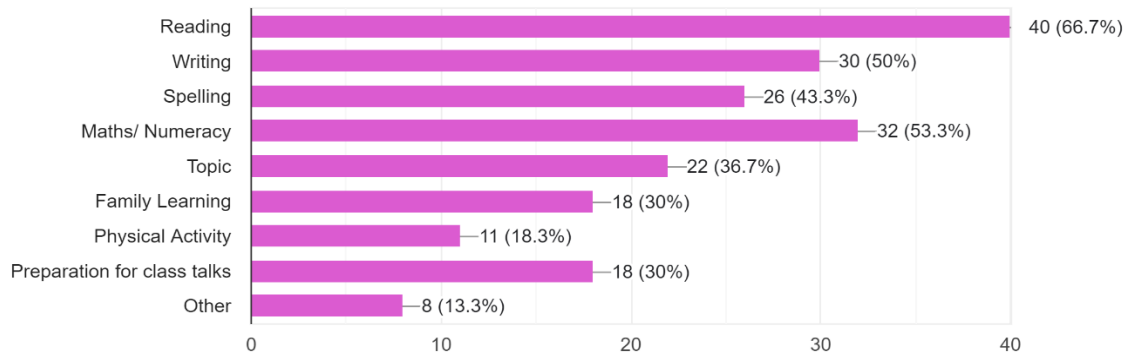
Pupils:



Parents/Carers:

What types of homework do you feel are most beneficial? Please tick all that apply.

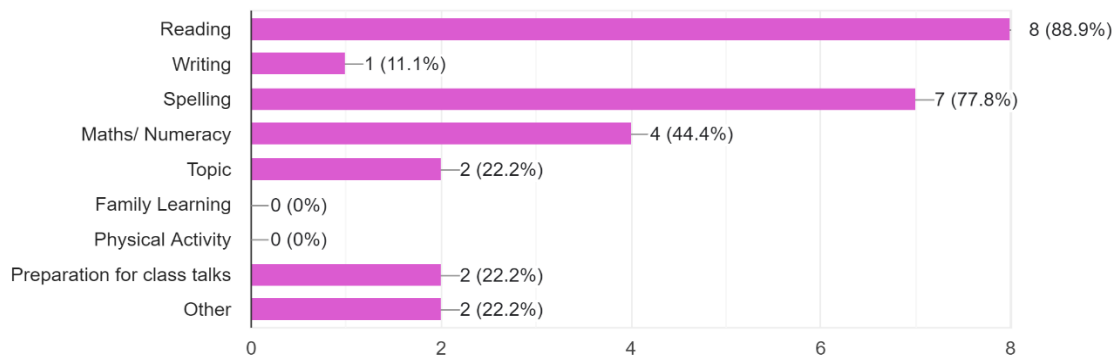
60 responses



Staff:

What types of homework do you feel are most beneficial? Please tick all that apply.

9 responses



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Barriers and challenges to learning at home

Please see below some comments taken from our 'Homework' survey completed in September 2023.

Pupil views	Parent/carer views	Staff views
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think we should have homework because it makes us smarter and it means we will get a good job. I would like health and wellbeing homework, active homework and some topic work. • I would like some homework, but I don't have a lot of time because I normally have clubs on and I like to go out and play with my friends. • I think we should have homework because it's important to practise the things we do in school at home so that we get better at them. I would like some topic homework. • I think we should have some homework, but not a lot. I think if you do a little bit of work at home, it will be easier when you come to school the next day. I would like spelling or some Maths. Some people might find homework hard to do because they have other things to do at home and they don't have enough time. • I think we should have homework because if people are really struggling in class, it gives them more time to practise. People struggle with different things, so I think we should have some spelling and some Maths. Some people might find a lot of homework hard because they go to a lot of clubs. • I think we should have homework, because I still need to work on spelling. • I don't think we should have homework because that's what school is for. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'd be OK if there was no homework as the reality is we can't do it every night due to other activities. • My son is struggling currently with his literacy (reading and writing). The homework provided helps us to work on this with him properly, instead of us trying to find appropriate reading books and think up writing scenarios. Both myself and his dad work full time so find it difficult to sit down and create scenarios. Please may I also add, while I think homework is absolutely necessary for learning, the volume can sometimes be extremely intense and we can find it difficult to fit in the week whilst working full-time and maintaining a house. • Children spend 6 hours a day learning. Most adults do a 6-8 hour shift a day and most don't go home to do it again. • Working families find it difficult to include homework in the day. My kids have clubs in the evening and finding time to squeeze in homework becomes an argument and frustration. They aren't learning anything new by having homework and I'm not able to teach them how to solve something if they are stuck on it as I'm unaware of the strategies used. • I like to see what they are doing in class, but that could be sent home as an information sheet. • Most parents or kids cannot self-study, but if given homework there is guidance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important for reinforcement of classroom learning and communication with parents as to what their child is learning in class. • It forms another home/school link and for the parents that are interested it allows them to see how their child/children are progressing. Can also be very useful if targeting any gaps in learning to give additional support/practice. • I think that having the amount of weekly homework the pupils did last year was too much. I think having weekly spelling practice and one-off tasks (such as preparation for a solo talk or school showcase/performance) would be beneficial. • Children in infants need homework to reinforce concepts taught in class. It's not enough for some children just to learn it in school. They need to over-learn at home to consolidate sounds to keep in line with the fast pace especially with phonics. • Should reinforce learning, but those who need it most don't often complete. • I think phonics homework for the infants is very important for sound and phoneme recognition. • I believe a no homework policy may be detrimental to some children as they require the additional time/tasks to complete in order to consolidate their learning. • Phonics and reading at home, for extra reinforcement, I feel is crucial in the infant stages.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think we should do spelling as a starter activity in class rather than at home. I don't think we should be doing much Maths and writing at home as we don't do our work like this in class. • I think homework gives us more education so that we can get a better job, but I think when we're at home we should be having a break and playing with our friends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think it's important and wouldn't want to see it stopped, but it can be very stressful trying to get tired and hungry kids to do this each night, particularly when you have 2 kids at different stages of learning. • I think it would be good to get something as homework, but maybe not weekly as it becomes a boring task for kids as it's the same thing every week so extremely hard to keep kids interested. • I believe a lot of learning is done at home and a lot of children have after school clubs etc where different forms of learning can take place • I feel that when the kids come home from school the last thing they want to do is homework and it puts pressure on the parents to try fit it in around a busy lifestyle. Personally it just leads to stress and anxiety both for children and parents, plus single parents struggle and homework just adds to the problems especially when there is more than one child in school. • They do enough school work in class, home is for family, fun time and clubs. Not more school work. • Time is precious. Kids are doing external clubs for physical activity, as well as other life skills and doing homework is extra stress and pressure which is not required. • Both kids have clubs throughout the week at various times / days on top of own work load it's sometimes difficult to fit in. • I do like homework to see how my child is progressing, but find it really difficult to fit in during the week with all out of school clubs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not completed by many children, wasted planning time for staff. • I think it can be valuable to pupils if it gives them additional opportunity to practise skills they are finding difficult in school. However, I also think that often children do not always have access to support at home to complete their homework fully and it can be an extra stressor for them.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I feel there should be something. It helps set a tone for the child when it comes to studying.• I think there are better ways to encourage and reinforce learning.• Homework is important to continue learning at home and a parent can see what they are learning in school.	
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Respect

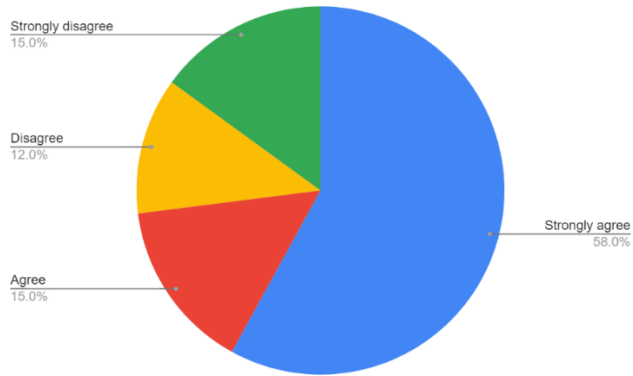
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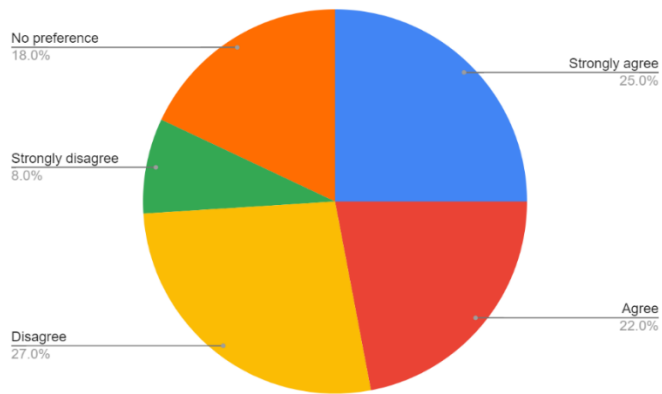


How do you feel about a 'No Homework' policy?

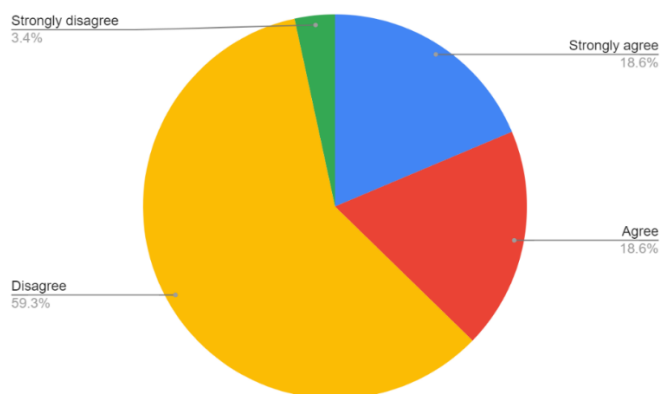
Pupils:



Parents and Carers:



Staff:



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The survey showed that whilst all stakeholders recognised the various barriers to homework that overall, homework is a valuable tool which creates a connection between home and school. It has highlighted it can help create good habits for later in life and also allows the consolidation of key skills.



Using all of the survey information we propose the following guidelines:

Our Intention:

- To provide opportunities to reinforce and deepen learning which has taken place in school
- To promote an effective partnership between home and school
- To encourage children as they get older to develop the confidence and self-discipline needed to work on their own, preparing them for the requirements of secondary school
- To ensure that all children and parents have a clear understanding about what is expected of them
- To ensure the needs of the individual children are taken into account

Our Implementation:

- The creation of opportunities for parents and children to work together to enjoy learning experiences.
- The provision of homework tasks designed to consolidate classroom learning without the burden of a formal written responses/returns.
- The provision of homework designed to promote independent learning in the older children.

Types of homework:

All stakeholders agreed that reading, spelling and numeracy and maths were the most important types of homework. Homework for all stages will therefore be under these 3 subjects.

- **Reading** - either an allocated reading book with set pages to read for the week/night or reading for pleasure targets given, e.g. 10 minutes of reading per night.
- **Spelling** - a list of the spelling words/rules being used in class that week with an overview of activities that can be undertaken at home. In P1-3 this may take the form of phonological awareness (phonics) activities.
- **Numeracy and Maths** - links to games/online activities that will consolidate the key learning in class.

On occasions, children may also be asked to prepare for a class talk or complete a task linked to their class topic. They might also be given optional activities (competitions) linked to special themed weeks in the school.

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In line with stakeholder views there will be no formal written homework given out. All tasks are designed to be active and/or completed orally.

How you can help your child with their homework

Below is a list of ways that you as a parent can show your child that you value their homework and the time and effort spent completing it. Homework will be issued in the form of a termly grid. No homework will be issued either the week before a holiday, or the week immediately after a holiday. As a school we hope that you will find this guidance helpful in supporting your child fully with their homework.

You can show you value your child's homework by:

- providing a suitable place in which your child can do their homework, preferably with an adult to discuss, encourage and support
- making it clear to your child that you value homework and support the school in explaining how it can help learning
- encouraging your child and praising them when they have completed work set

Additionally, you can support your child's development by:

- visits to libraries, museums etc.
- cooking with them
- taking your child swimming/to clubs
- playing games, e.g. board games, cards, ball games
- watching informative TV programmes together
- providing opportunities for craft activities, e.g. cutting, sticking, sewing, painting etc.
- gardening and growing plants
- using the internet to research something with your child (following guidelines for safe internet use) talking to your child about schoolwork, their day, what they have been learning about and how they have been learning

Remember, homework is about reinforcing, practising and confidence building... Enthusing your child about undertaking homework and modelling the high value of homework to them is of key importance. Make it fun!

Individual Needs of Children

All homework should be appropriate for the differing needs of the children. From time to time, additional tasks may be set in order to support a pupil. This will always be done in consultation with parents/carers and teaching staff.



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