**The Avenue School Special Needs Academy**

**Home Learning Policy**

**Rationale**

At The Avenue School Special Needs Academy, we believe that learning at home as well as at school is an essential part of our pupils’ education. Our policy is underpinned by the belief that we want to support and work with parents and carers to help each pupil achieve the very best they can. Above all, home learning should be an enjoyable experience and not a task that puts pressure on the pupil or the family. With this in mind, our approach is individualised and flexible and we emphasise that all home learning is optional.

**Purpose**

Through home learning, we aim to:

* Develop a partnership with parents and carers, involving them actively in their children’s learning
* Consolidate and reinforce skills that are worked on in school, especially to aid fluency and generalisation
* Encourage pupils to develop self confidence

**Procedures**

For the Early Years and Early Years Plus Pathways, home learning opportunities are sent home at the start of each term. They include play activities as well as creative tasks linked to the topic studied in class that term. For the Nurture and Engagement, Life Skills and Practical Skills and Academic and Work Experience Pathways, home learning is differentiated according to each pupil’s and family’s needs. As part of the annual review process and through informal meetings, we aim to seek parents’ and carers’ views on what their preferred home learning routine / activities are. Home learning can then be set meaningfully for each individual pupil, so that the process is supportive of our rationale.

The following are examples of home learning tasks on different pathways:

* Using particular symbols, signs, objects or words to support a pupil’s understanding and communication
* Using a particular communication aid or system at home that has been advised by therapists
* Playing with cause and effect toys
* Using a visual timetable for bedtime routines
* Choosing an activity or playing turn-taking games with family members
* Bringing in a special object for show and tell
* Functional maths activities involving money and time
* Trips into the community with family to help with shopping
* Looking after pets at home with increasing independence
* Working on a toileting, dressing or eating/drinking program
* Home and school working on consistent strategies for behaviour following an agreed behaviour support plan
* Family and school using consistent strategies to support a child’s sensory needs (ie a sensory diet)
* Helping with simple chores in the house
* Reading a personalised social story
* Using symbols / visuals to talk about the school day
* Reading a book
* Learning spellings
* Carrying out a simple research project

If a parent or a carer asks for a specific piece of homework for their child, we endeavour to organise this where possible. On request, we can also provide ideas for ‘holiday homework’ so families have a tool box of fun, educational activities for the long summer break to ensure pupils remain stimulated and retain their skill levels.

Maarit Eben

February 2019