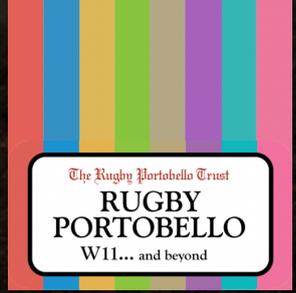


# HOMEWORK CLUB



REPORT BY  
THE RUGBY PORTOBELLO TRUST

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SUPPORTING THE CHILDREN AND  
YOUNG PEOPLE OF NORTH KENSINGTON

# Overview

Our Homework Club has been a cornerstone of our support for the children of North Kensington since 2005, working to close the academic attainment gap in North Kensington, where schools are often over-populated and under-funded with high rates of absences, permanent exclusions and children receiving free-school-meals.

In response to the first lockdown of the pandemic, which took place in March 2020, we established our Virtual Classroom to support children after the announcement that schools were to be shut, leaving many children without access to regular academic support.

It quickly became apparent that our Virtual Classroom was essential to supporting children through lockdown, and the success of this programme led us to develop it further and make it a mainstay of our Homework Club offering.

Today, our Homework Club continues to run in two distinct forms through our Hybrid Learning Model, offering both in-person and online support to children in Years 2 to 6.



# In-Person Homework Club

Our in-person Homework Club is **well-designed to support younger children**, as it allows us to work closely with them and identify areas needing support. In-person Homework Club runs Mondays and Wednesdays each term-time week and has **25-30 children attending each session**. After receiving support on their homework, the children are then able to take advantage of our free Junior Club, which offers sports, music, team games and art, which are all designed to challenge their creativity, build their physical and mental health and develop their communication and team-working skills.

As well as supporting children on specific projects and weekly homework assignments, **in-person Homework Club supports young children with their communication and social skills** by giving them regular exposure to their peers and adult role-models.

Our in-person Homework Club is as popular as ever with the children, but we're currently facing a challenge recruiting our usual number of volunteers for this programme. Many of our long-standing volunteers have not returned to in-person volunteering since the re-opening of our services, so we will be looking to fill this gap, but will still be able to deliver this programme at full capacity in the meantime.



# Online Homework Club

Whilst our online Homework Club was intended to be a temporary solution to the education gap left by lockdown, we realised there were strengths to this approach that differ from our in-person Homework Club, so we intend to run both forms of the programme concurrently for the foreseeable future.

Whilst our in-person Homework Club focusses on supporting children with their homework, our **online Homework Club is more focused on tutoring**, using the 'Atom Learning' programme to support children with their **English, Maths and Verbal/Non-Verbal Reasoning**.

During an online session, children are assigned to one of our volunteer tutors and put on a 'channel' within Microsoft Teams, which allows our Service Manager to oversee the different lessons. Children work either one-on-one or in groups of up to four children with one tutor.

Our online delivery is **aimed at improving academic attainment all-around** and has proven to be an incredibly effective tool at preparing children in Year 6 for exams. We also find the online approach works better for this age group as it helps them to focus on their work without the distraction of other children and activities taking place in a shared classroom.



As our online Homework Club is academically focused, the biggest challenge we face is the extreme range in academic abilities, even within the same year group. This was most noticeable after more than a year of successive lockdowns and we expect to see the impact of this for years to come.

Online Homework Club runs term-time Tuesdays and Thursdays, supporting **15-20 children each session**, some of whom also attend in-person Homework Club.

Visit [tinyurl.com/RPTHomeworkClub](https://tinyurl.com/RPTHomeworkClub) to learn more about our Online Homework Club

# Future Developments

This term we'll be introducing **Latin language** and **Greek and Latin mythology** to our in-person Homework Club. We want to give local children the opportunity to learn a subject they do not have access to through their current school curriculum. We plan to start these sessions with 5-8 children to gauge engagement.

We are also looking into the benefits of **introducing laptops to our Wednesday sessions** to help children prepare for SATs using the Atom Learning system, which intuitively adjusts to the children's skill levels, but does have certain drawbacks.

For our online Homework Club, we'll focus on **recruiting Year 5 students** so we can support them through a longer period of their preparation for secondary school entrance exams. The focus for this group will be on **developing their verbal and non-verbal reasoning skills**.

After the successful delivery of our first Parents' Evening regarding secondary school entrance, we intend to deliver another session, but earlier in the year to give parents and their children a bigger head-start on the process. These sessions **walk parents through the process of applying for secondary schools**, which can be incredibly difficult for our cohort of parents who are not familiar with the British education system or do not speak fluent English.

We are currently developing a project proposal to retain our 'Kickstarter' work placement colleague who is three months into a six-month placement. His role as our IT Community Coach has proved instrumental in supporting the success of our online Homework Club. During online Homework Club, he runs an **IT-support channel that children and parents are able to drop into** if they're having trouble with the system; he is quickly able to address IT issues, which allows our children and volunteers to seamlessly move between channels when issues arise. In addition to continuing his important work online, he will also run **sessions for children and parents around online safety** and **crash-courses with the children to teach them to resolve basic IT issues**, such as problems with microphones, headphones and connections.

# Quick Facts

## In-person Homework Club

- Runs Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:30pm to 5pm
- 25-30 children per session
- Supports children in Years 2 to 6
- Runs onsite at our building on Walmer Road, W11
- Started in 2005

## Online Homework Club

- Runs Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:15pm to 5:30pm
- 15-20 children per session
- Best suited to children in Years 5 and 6
- Volunteers and children can be based anywhere when taking part
- Started in 2020

