

Homework Policy



Reviewed December 2018

It is generally agreed that some form of work at home is desirable for all primary age children. Homework should not be an unpleasant experience and, in general, should be used to reinforce children's school work. Homework also gives parents an opportunity to discuss school work with their children, providing some understanding of, and insight into, the National Curriculum.

In light of the new curriculum (2014) we have adapted the policy to reflect the key priorities and a focus on the acquisition of key, core skills which will ensure children are able to access the demands of the new curriculum.

Aims

Through this policy we aim to:

- Develop an effective partnership between the school and parents in pursuing the aims of the school (as with the home/school agreement).
- Encourage and enhance the school work ethic.
- Consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding, particularly in reading, spelling, grammar and mental maths.
- Enable parents to share in the life of the school.
- Encourage a feeling of self worth and help develop a sense of pride and achievement in an activity completed.
- Help prepare older children, particularly those in year 6, for life at secondary school.

For the policy to be successful and to make the greatest contribution to learning, the following criteria will need to be met:

- Tasks are carefully planned and structured to support progression in learning.
- There is consistent practice across each academy in setting, managing and marking homework (age appropriate).
- Parents to fully understand the task which enables them to effectively support their child.
- Parents are treated as partners in their children's learning.
- There are high expectations of pupils in completing homework.
- Pupils receive prompt clear feedback on their work.
- Homework policies are regularly monitored and evaluated to check that they support pupils' learning in the best possible way.

The purpose, type and amount of homework which is appropriate for pupils of different ages

The purpose of homework changes as children get older. Formal homework starts in Year 1 and is gradually introduced from the start of the year. For children in Key Stage 1 and Early Years, developing a partnership with parents and involving them actively in children's learning is the key purpose and the activities children are asked to do at home may better be described as 'homework tasks' or home learning, rather than 'homework'.

Literacy homework will include the learning of spelling rules, high frequency words, phonics and practising correct punctuation. In maths it is recommended that number games and practical tasks are used and more formal exercises for the older children that they can do at home and, again, involve parents.

Other activities for older children might include:

Finding out information.

Preparing oral presentations.

ICT

Pupils are invited to use ICT if this is available to them. The school provides such facilities at lunchtime for children unable to access them at home.

Management of Homework

Not all homework will be formally marked, but all homework will be acknowledged and seen by the teacher. There are many different ways of providing feedback other than through written comments, e.g. learning spellings for a test, sharing homework with the rest of the class, producing work for display etc. Providing written feedback is demanding on teachers' time.

Other strategies may include pupils reviewing their own work in small groups. N.B. Rewards, stickers, announcements in assemblies are important tools in maintaining pupil motivation.

Homework does not just mean formal exercises carried out by children without help from adults. We positively encourage adult support. In the case of Key Stage 2 children, the involvement of parents in joint activities, which may be only brief, is most valuable in promoting children's learning.

By the time children reach Year 6 their homework programme will cover a range of tasks and curriculum content, with a regular weekly schedule. This approach benefits their learning and also ensures that, in relation to homework, their transition to Year 7 (secondary school) is as smooth as possible.

Recommended time allocation for homework

All homework will be set on Fridays and be returned Thursdays. Children have the choice of completing their homework any day, thus allowing them to still attend important clubs such as beavers, cubs, brownies, birthday parties, sports, etc.

Years 1 and 2 15 mins per week

Years 3 and 4 20 mins per week

Years 5 and 6 30 mins per week

Topic/Creative Curriculum and science

Formal topic/science homework will not be set. However, we strongly encourage children to complete reading, research and visits to enrich and develop their learning. If children show a particular interest in an area of study we would very much welcome them to complete projects at home and bring them into school to be shared.

Our topics for the term will be published to parents at the start of each term by means of a newsletter. This will ensure parents can assist children with independent research and discuss their learning at home.

English

The new curriculum places a greater emphasis on the transcript elements of writing and remains focused on phonics and developing strong readers. For this reason all English homework will be concentrated on improving children's basic skills of spelling, grammar and punctuation. This may be a rehearsal of key learning objectives and spelling/grammar rules.

Mathematics

It is now a requirement of the National Curriculum that children know all of their times tables by the end of year 4. We recognise the significant impact mental

arithmetic has on children's ability to move forward in the curriculum and complete the complex requirements of the new curriculum. Our mathematics homework will focus on mental arithmetic, number facts and times tables. This may not always be a written task as we recognise that verbally rehearsing number facts, times tables and mental arithmetic with an adult at home is an efficient and effective method of learning.

Reading

It is well recognised that reading at home with an adult gives children the best possible opportunities to improve their reading skills. We have deliberately reduced the 'formal' homework set and given a longer period of time to complete this so that reading can remain a focus. It is desirable for parents to listen to their children read every night for at least 10 minutes.

Younger children will also be sent home with phonics 'sounds' to practise at home and if children need extra support they will be provided with additional activities/games to support their phonics learning at home.

Children do not have to finish the task but they do need to spend at least the allocated time on the task as shown above, it would be helpful for parents to leave a comment e.g. 'John has spent 20 mins working on this but has struggled and may need some help or John spent 20 mins working on this and enjoyed it so much he wanted to do more'.

Parents' role

Parents are expected to support and encourage their child by giving time and a home environment in which homework can be done. The class teacher will, as far as possible, ensure that details of a task to be done at home will be noted in the child's homework diary/contact book/VLE, together with any other messages about class activities.

Children benefit enormously from being able to discuss what they have done with their parents. This is not to suggest that the parent should spend time altering or correcting the child's work, but rather discuss it and suggest how it might be done differently or improved. Constructive and encouraging comments enable the child to develop a better understanding of the work and reinforce what is taught in school.