



Background documentation

- Homework: Guidelines for Primary and Secondary Schools (DfES 1998) (defines the purpose of homework)
- Homework: Learning from practice. OFSTED/HMSO 1999.

Purpose

- Developing an effective partnership between the school and parents and other carers in pursuing the aims of the school. This is also, of course, the purpose of our home school agreement.
- Consolidating and reinforcing skills and understanding, particularly in Literacy and Maths.
- Exploiting resources for learning, of all kinds, at home.
- Extended school learning, for example, through additional reading.
- Encouraging pupils as they get older to develop confidence and the self discipline needed to study on their own, and preparing them for the requirements of secondary school.

Approach

Homework builds on work done in the classroom. It enables the class teacher and the parent to confirm that the child has an understanding of a subject and helps to install and develop a sense of discipline about work at home. If a teacher sets a date for completion there is an expectation that work will be completed by the set date.

Most homework will focus on English and Maths (Science in Years 5 and 6). Occasionally other subjects, such as ICT, History or Geography will also be set – linked to a Year group's current topic. Homework in FS and KS1 consists mainly of optional ideas for parents to try out with their children. In KS2, homework is more formal and is returned to school for marking.

Homework should be provided on a consistent basis, with sufficient time allowed for the completion of the task. Children will be given clear instructions about the activity to be undertaken. The amount of time taken on a piece of homework will vary according to the ability of the child.

DCFS Recommended time allocation for homework

- **Years 1 & 2:** 1 hour/week
- **Years 3 & 4:** 1.5 hours/week
- **Years 5 & 6:** 30 minutes/day

The following shows what homework is expected, in general terms, across the school:

- **Year R:** Daily reading; Playing of sound and word games provided by school; Follow up suggestions given in the weekly newsletter – this usually involves practical activities.
- **Years 1 & 2:** Daily reading; Follow up suggestions given in the weekly newsletter – based around Maths, Literacy and Topic work. Occasional pieces of formal work in Year 2.

- **Years 3 & 4:** Daily reading and tables/number facts. Weekly spellings. A piece of Maths homework is set each Monday to be returned Thursday. A piece of Literacy homework is set each Thursday to be returned the following Monday. A maximum of 20 minutes per day should be spent on homework.
- **Years 5 & 6:** Daily reading and tables/number facts. Weekly spellings. A piece of Maths homework is set each Friday to be returned the following Tuesday. A piece of English homework is set each Thursday to be returned the following Monday. Science homework is set once a week.
There will be an expectation that children in year 5 and 6 will spend longer on homework activities in preparation for secondary school. This should not normally exceed 30 minutes total per evening and would include reading for enjoyment.

There may be times when some children will be asked to complete work begun in class, to ensure that they maintain optimum progress. Any child not completing work to the expectation of the teacher may be asked to finish their work at home. Time spent on this should not exceed 20 minutes.

Role of the parent

The parent is expected to support and encourage the child by giving time and a home environment in which homework can be done. 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 comments enable the child to develop a better understanding of the work and reinforce what is taught in school. Above all other subjects, reading is a crucial aspect of school work and needs to be encouraged at all times. A child's written skills reflect the attitude of reading. A child who reads widely and with enthusiasm is often able to translate this into written work. It is not possible for an adult to hear a child read at school every day. It is most important, therefore, for a parent to try to hear their child read as often as possible, to discuss the plot and characterisation and ask the child questions about what has been read. Younger children need to be heard on a regular daily basis, older children may however be expected to read independently and silently to themselves.

It is of great benefit to children of all ages to discuss issues of all kinds with their parents. It is hoped that parents will support the school in encouraging their children to develop a responsible attitude to their homework.

Teachers will ensure that all homework which children have to do on their own and which requires marking is marked as soon as possible. This homework policy will be evaluated regularly using feedback from parents, pupils and staff.