



Westwood with Iford School

Homework Policy

1 Introduction

Homework is anything children do outside the normal school day that contributes to their learning, in response to guidance from the school. Homework encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents to support the children's learning. For example, parents who spend time reading stories to their children before bedtime are helping with homework.

This policy has been reviewed in the light of the views expressed from teachers, children and a parental consultation.

2 Rationale for Homework

Homework is an important part of a child's education, and can add much to a child's development. We recognise that children can benefit greatly from the complementary learning that they do at home and that homework is an important example of the partnership between home and school. One of the aims of our teaching is for children to develop as independent learners, and we believe that completing home tasks is one way in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning.

Homework can play a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. However, we also acknowledge the important role of play and free time in a child's growth and development. While homework is important, it should not prevent children from taking part in the activities of various out-of-school clubs and of other organisations that play an important part in the lives of our pupils. We are well aware that children spend more time at home than at school, and we believe that they develop their interests and skills to the full only when parents encourage them to make maximum use of the opportunities available outside school. At Westwood we acknowledge the importance of parents and families spending quality time together and understand that the amount of homework during school-free time should not impinge on this.

3 Aims and Principles for homework

The aims and objectives of homework are:

- to enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development;
- to help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner;
- to promote cooperation between home and school in supporting each child's learning;

- to enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered in sufficient depth;
- to provide educational experiences not possible in school;
- to consolidate and reinforce the learning undertaken in school, and to allow children to practice skills taught in lessons;
- to help children to develop good work habits for the future.

4 Guidelines for homework

Staff and pupils regard homework as an integral part of the curriculum – it is planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of learning.

Reading homework activities.

- In Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, we give children books to take home and read with their parents.
- We give guidance to parents on how best to support reading at home and on achieving the maximum benefit from this time spent reading with their child.
- For Key Stage 2 children or fluent readers we either give books to read at home or accept book chosen from the school library, local library or from home if agreed as appropriate.
- Children should ideally read daily however this may not always be possible. Therefore we expect **all** children to read a minimum of 3 times per week at home. This should be with a parent/adult. More fluent readers may demonstrate to a parent/adult that they are reading at home. This can be done through questioning/dialogue about the text/book or through a review of what they have just read.
- In Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and those children who require it, will also be given high frequency words to learn to sight read. This will also continue in Y3 up until the end of term 2.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 will be asked to learn to develop their sight vocabulary using the age related word lists from the Literacy Strategy.

5 Homework Challenges may include some of the following:

- Each week in Key Stage 1 and 2 children will be set differentiated homework challenges. Each challenge will include all or some of the following: 1. Spelling/phonics, 2. Number bonds/timetables, 3. Topic, 4. Handwriting and 5. Problem solving.
- Spellings/phonics will be based on phonic patterns, high frequency words, connectives, 'Wow' words and topic/maths vocabulary. Spellings will be assessed through dictation and/or used in a handwriting exercise.
- Times tables/number bonds will be assessed/marked depending on the activity.
- Topic homework is varied and can include specific or research activities. It may include collecting or finding things related to the topic or even speaking to a grandparent adult about their experienced etc. When we ask children to study a topic, or to research a particular subject, we encourage them to use not only the school library but also the local library, as well as online resources and factual software.
- Handwriting practise will be encouraged combining different aspects of the homework challenges or to using patterns/joins related to the handwriting policy.

- Problem Solving - Children will be asked to complete open ended examples or specific real life problems related to the learning objectives covered in class or to the class topic. This will be marked in line with the schools' Marking Policy.
- All Homework Challenges will be marked with the children wherever possible.
- Key Stage 2 children will be expected to complete longer more challenging tasks than in KS1 and work more independently.
- We set homework challenges routinely on Thursday of each week and expect them to be completed and returned to school on the following Tuesday.
- We expect the children to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school through practice at home. We also set homework as a means of helping the children to revise for examinations, as well as to ensure that prior learning has been understood.
- Homework is marked according to the general schools' marking policy. Homework is acknowledged, discussed and praised each week. There may be issues arising from the work, which the teacher will follow up in lesson time.
- We recognise that children have individual learning styles, which means that some tasks can be completed in a number of different ways, while others demand a particular approach.

6 Amount of homework

- Reading in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The time a child spends on reading homework is separate from homework challenges. It is more important for younger children or those in the early stages of reading to read frequently rather than for long sessions less frequently. E.g. ten minutes per day rather than 30 minutes per week.
- Reading in Key Stage 2. Older children can expect to read for longer periods of time. In Year 3 and 4 we expect those children reading within National Expectations for their age to read at home for a minimum of 10 minutes per session. Children in Years 5 and 6 should read at home for a minimum of 30 minutes per session. Children can always choose to read for longer should they wish to.
- As they move through the school, we will increase the amount of homework that we give the children and with it the time that they need to complete it. As we recognise that children learn in different ways, we understand that the time spent on homework will vary from child to child. We expect all children to complete their homework to the best of their ability.
- Homework challenges for children in Key Stage 1 should not exceed more than one hour per week. In Years 3 and 4 it should not exceed 15-20 minutes per night and for children in Years 5 and 6 it should not exceed 30 minutes per night.
- We give all our pupils a Home and School Partnership Book (HASP) in which parents, teachers or Teaching Assistant (TA) can make any relevant comments regarding the homework.
- Each child will be given a Homework book in which to keep their Home work Challenges.

7 Inclusion and homework

- We set homework for all children as a normal part of school life. We ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to the ability of the child, and we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way.

8 The role of parents

- Parents have a vital role to play in their child's education, and homework is an important part of this process. We ask parents to encourage their child to complete the homework tasks that are set. We invite them to help their children as and when they feel it to be necessary, and to provide them with the sort of environment that allows children to do their best. Parents can support their child by providing a good working space at home, by enabling their child to visit the library regularly, and by discussing the work that their child is doing.
- We ask parents to check the HASP book at least once a week, and to sign it as requested.
- If parents have any questions about homework, they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher. If they wish to express serious concerns regarding the school homework policy, or their questions have not been answered to their satisfaction, parents should contact the Head teacher. If they wish to make a complaint regarding the policy or the way in which it is implemented they should contact the governing body.

9 Use of Computing

- The use of Computing and the Internet has made a significant contribution to the amount of reference material available at home, and the ease and speed with which it can be accessed. However, our teachers expect their pupils to produce their own work, perhaps by editing something they have found, or by expressing it in their own words. The children will achieve something more worthwhile rather than merely download and/or print out something that has been written by somebody else.
- There are many websites containing highly educational material which can have a powerful effect on children's learning. Our school website provides links to the sites which will best support the children's learning and they will be indicated on the bottom of the Homework Challenge Sheet. Pupils may also be set homework which utilises the school's Google Apps for Education suite of applications. Parents are advised always to supervise their child's access to the Internet.
- Some educational software that we use in school can be bought by parents on a home-user licence. This ensures that children are using age-appropriate software in their work at home. The school will supply interested parents with details.

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