

KIRKBY MALZEARD CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy Title: Homework

Contact Person: Mrs A.M. Peacock Head Teacher

Definition:

Homework is anything that children do outside the normal school day, which 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 children's learning. For example, a parent who spends time reading a story to their child before bedtime is helping with homework.

Rationale:

Homework is a very important part of a child's education and can add much to a child's development. The government made clear its commitment to homework in the 1997 White Paper, 'Excellence in Schools', where homework was seen as 'an essential part of good education'. We recognise that the time and resources available limit the educational experience that any school by itself can provide; children benefit greatly therefore from the mutual support of parents and teachers in encouraging them to learn both at home and at school. Indeed we see homework as an important way of establishing successful dialogue between teachers and parents.

Homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. 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 wide range of out-of-school clubs and organisations that play an important part in the lives of many children. We are well aware that children spend more time at home than at school, and we believe they develop their skills, interests and talents to the full only when parents encourage them to make maximum use of the experiences and opportunities that are available outside of school.

Aims and objectives

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 a partnership 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 learning done in school and to allow children to practice skills taught in lessons;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future.

Types of homework

We set a variety of homework activities depending upon the age and needs of the pupils.

In the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 we encourage the children to read by giving them books to take home to read and talk about with their

parents. We give guidance information to parents to help them achieve the maximum benefit from this time spent reading with their child. We also ask Key Stage 1 children to learn spellings or mathematical tables as part of their homework. Sometimes we ask children to talk about a topic at home prior to studying it in school. For example, in the history topic on toys, we ask children to find out what toys were popular when their grandparents were young and, if possible, to bring examples into school to show the other children. Sometimes we ask children to find and collect things that we then use in science lessons, and occasionally we ask children to take home work that they have started in school when we believe that they would benefit from spending further time on it. When we ask children to study a topic or to research a particular subject, we encourage them to use the school and local library and the Internet and CD-ROMs.

At Key Stage 2 we continue to give children the sort of homework activities outlined above but we expect them to do more tasks independently. We set literacy and numeracy homework routinely each week. Some of this work, such as spellings, reading & learn by heart facts for maths are ongoing activities which help to consolidate and reinforce learning done in school through practice at home. Children may also be given further activities to support the work they have been doing in a subject at that particular time, for example work on division in maths. The activity will be familiar to the child and will be differentiated to meet their needs.

We may also ask them to conduct research into our topic themes to enhance and develop our work in school. This homework would be incorporated into their project work.

In Class 4 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.

Amount of homework

We increase the amount of homework that we give the children as they move through the school. We expect Key Stage 1 children to spend approximately one hour a week doing homework, this will include time spent reading and talking about books with a parent. We expect children in years 3 and 4 to spend approximately 15–20 minutes per night on homework and children in years 5 and 6 to spend approximately 30 minutes per night. This is in line with the DfEE guidelines that were issued in 1998.

In Foundation and Key Stage 1 parents are asked to record their child's reading activities in their reading record. In KS2 homework folders/books are provided into which the homework is fastened and this provides an ongoing record of homework. These are sent home each week with the child to enable parents to see the progress their child has made with their homework, to read any comments added to the homework and to add, if they wish, comments of their own.

Pupils with special educational needs

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. If a child has special needs, we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way. When setting homework to pupils who are named on the register of special needs, we refer to the Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and their personal needs.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The teacher is responsible for setting appropriate homework for their class, giving a completion date and for monitoring its return.

The teacher should mark the homework and discuss any issues which arise with the individual pupil. On occasions peer marking may be used.

The school homework folder in KS2 can be used for comments to keep parents updated with progress.

Pupils are to ensure that they place their homework into their folder book and take it home.

Pupils must ask the teacher or teaching assistant if they are unsure about what they are to do or when it is to be returned to school.

Pupils are to ensure that they complete and return the work as requested. If they persistently fail to complete homework the class teacher will speak to their 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 and return them to school. We invite them to help their children as they feel necessary and 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 homework file at least once a week, to add comments if they wish and to sign it.

If parents have any problems or questions about homework, they should, in the first instance, contact the child’s class teacher. If their questions are of a more general nature, they should contact the head teacher. Finally, if they wish to make a complaint about the school homework policy or the way it is implemented; parents should contact the governing body.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to agree and then monitor the school homework policy. Parents complete a questionnaire during the school’s OFSTED inspection, and as part of our ongoing self evaluation they are asked to complete a similar questionnaire annually by the head teacher. Our governing body pays careful consideration to any concern that is raised at that time, or in between OFSTED inspections, by any parent. Our governing body may, at any time, request from our head teacher a report on the way homework is organised in our school.

Who will be responsible for monitoring? Head Teacher & Governing Body

Adopted by Governing Body (Date)

Review Date

