



Homework Policy ©

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CHASING HORIZONS

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Rationale

At the Federation we believe that homework helps maximise a child's potential and create crucial links between learning in different contexts as well as development of independent learning behaviours. Homework is a statutory requirement. Home-School links are important to help each child achieve and in nurturing a positive learning community in which parents and carers feel valued and involved. The approach to homework varies throughout the school according to the age of the child, but at each level home-school links are vitally important in promoting success.

We believe that home learning should be a positive experience and should not impinge negatively on a child's wider social and emotional development. Children work hard when they come to school and we strongly believe that family life and leisure time is important.

Aims

To provide opportunities for parents, pupils and our school to work in partnership in order to:

- extend and support learning via reinforcement and revision
- ensure a co-ordinated approach throughout the school
- support progression towards independence, individual responsibilities and positive personalised learning behaviours.
- ensure that parents have a clear understanding of expectations from school
- support and maintain the relevance and importance of school learning in the home context.

Homework and Absence

If children are absent because of illness or a family holiday no work is sent home. Where a child has a long-term absence a home curriculum may be agreed.

If parents have any concerns or queries about homework they should first approach their child's teacher.

Homework is compulsory and any child who is not completing it will be asked to stay in at lunch or break to do so. If this becomes a regular occurrence, the class teacher will call in the parents to discuss how we can support further.

Monitoring of Homework by Teachers

Not all homework will have a written mark or comment from the teacher. Some homework may be shared orally in an introduction or plenary session of a lesson. Children may, on occasions, mark their own work using a set marking system.

Home reading diaries will be checked and signed by class teachers or teaching assistants on a regular basis.

Early Years (Nursery and Reception)

Through discussions with the class teacher a range of suitable activities will be suggested for 'family-learning'. Parents are encouraged to regularly enjoy a book with their child at home. Parents will receive family learning tasks to do once per week.



Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

Key Stage 1 homework is aimed at encouraging the child to build up enthusiasm towards learning and to develop a positive self-image.

It is important that all writing is completed in lead pencil and not pens, biro or felt tip pens. Presentation of work is important at this stage.

Literacy

In Year 1 parents are asked to read with their child daily and record comments and observations in reading diaries. Sharing books, reading aloud and hearing stories are crucial in developing good reading habits and related skills. Children may have tasks to complete and words to practice (key word spellings and sight vocabulary). Parents can help children to learn letter sounds to support the teaching of phonics within school. Reading repetitive rhymes and poems to children can provide a sound basis for number and language concepts.

In Year 2 children's reading can be extended by:

- Re-telling in sequence the story they have read
- Describing favourite parts of what has been read
- Predicting what will happen next
- Discussing characters actions, feelings and emotions and related it to self experience and understanding.

In Year 2 children are sometimes given spellings to learn at home using the 'look, say, cover, write, check' method. Parents can extend this by helping children to put words into sentences to make sure they know the meanings of the words.

Numeracy

In Year 1 counting games can be played and simple board games such as Snakes and Ladders which involve counting forwards and backwards as well as counting songs and rhymes.

During Year 2 children will be set home learning tasks but will also benefit from supported experiences such as reading the time from a clock, counting money while shopping and weighing and measuring when cooking. All board games and card games are helpful in encouraging children to use mental and problem solving skills.

Parents are able to see the expectations for their child's year group on the Federation website. This also gives further information and suggestions of activities to support them.

Topic Work

Parents can encourage topic work by helping children to find relevant information and objects. Visits to the library and places of interest as well as internet research are also encouraged.

All pupils will be asked to complete a termly Independent Learning Project (see Appendix). This is voluntary and comes in addition to normal homework set. The practice of termly homework projects continues throughout the school and is in addition to literacy and numeracy homework. Projects are designed to enable all pupils to achieve. Guidance on each project will be given to pupils and parents.



Key Stage 2

Homework is not set every night. Formal homework is set each week in addition to ongoing project work and reinforcement of basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Basic skills homework includes:

- Learning multiplication facts (times tables)
- Spellings
- Reading

Parents should continue to hear their children read frequently and record any comments or observations in reading diaries. It is the expectation that class teachers will monitor the use of these diaries and support children in selecting appropriate home reading materials. Time should be made to discuss all aspects of the school curriculum. We encourage parents to ask children what they have 'learned' rather than what they 'did' during the school day and to support their child in developing a routine of completing and returning homework within the expected timeframe given.

Parents are able to see the expectations for their child's year group on the Federation website. This also gives further information and suggestions of activities to support them.

In Key Stage 2 homework that is additional to spellings, reading and multiplication facts could take the form of:

- Mini-projects
- Finishing or consolidating work
- Research work
- Finding things of interest in connection with work undertaken in class
- Work sheets
- Preparation for talks/class debates

Years 3 and 4

The amount of work set will increase during the Juniors but the time spent on homework during any one day should last no longer than 40 minutes.

All school books should be kept in good condition. Work has to be shown to advisory teachers, inspectors and other schools. The school would like it to look good and reflect the child's true capabilities.

Children will continue to bring reading books home. Parents still need to support children by hearing them read daily. To encourage reading for meaning children can summarise the story they have read, describe their favourite parts, discuss the main characters, predict what will happen next.

Children in Years 3 and 4 will also regularly bring home spellings and times tables to be learned. They need as much encouragement as possible in all homework activities. In Year 3 all homework should be completed in pencil. Pen may be used for homework in Year 4. Word processed work may, on occasion, be acceptable but the emphasis will generally be on developing fine motor control and handwriting skills.

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Years 5 and 6

As children get older the amount of homework will increase to around 1 hr per week, but it is vital to maintain a healthy balance between school and home life. Homework will continue to be set in the same way as in Years 3 and 4, but may also include revision for end of year tests.

It is important for parents to understand that even fluent readers still benefit from being heard reading, and discussing the meanings, plot structures, characters and similarities and differences between texts. Children will continue to be expected to record reading in a home reading diary.

Learning Support/Special Educational Needs

Pupils who require consolidation of particular skills may be given differentiated tasks. The tasks will be a reinforcement of the activities that are being used in school. We are aware that those children who experience difficulties may not complete all aspects of class homework. The teacher will indicate which areas are to be covered and adjust according to need. Where children are given regular homework related to need, e.g. ALS/SpLD the class teacher may indicate that this is in place of class homework.

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Home Tutor Homework

Where children see a private tutor this is an arrangement between the parent and tutor. School homework is expected to be completed. In the event that children feel pressurised by two sets of homework most professional tutors recognise the importance of working alongside school and do not insist that their homework takes priority. It is the role of the parents to organise this.

Equal Opportunities

We are aware that pupils have varied support at home. Homework is designed so that the child can complete it independently, if necessary. We acknowledge that some pupils will not have the same level of parental support as others but we do not seek to deny them the opportunity to work towards the same goals. The Federation provides lunch time homework clubs for all those pupils who wish to attend. These are supervised by a member of staff who is able to support the children.

