

HOMEWORK

Homework is a very important part of a pupil'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 described as 'an essential part of good education'. We recognise that the educational experience that any school by itself can provide is limited by the time and resources available; pupils can therefore benefit greatly from the complementary learning that they do at home. One of the aims of our teaching is for pupils to develop as independent learners, and we believe that doing homework is one of the main ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning.

Homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. However, we also acknowledge the important role of free time in a child's growth and development. Work at home provides quiet and private conditions needed for creative and thoughtful work of all kinds. It can provide access to materials and resources and sources of information that are not always available in the classroom, and can provide opportunities and the incentive to 'find out' more and research topics with more open ended time frames.

Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of homework are:

Generally:

- It can help children to make more rapid progress in learning.
- It can allow children to develop the practice of working on their own without the constant presence of the teacher or other pupils. It promotes independence and resourcefulness and this way of working is vital in formal education beyond the primary stage.
- Work at home provides quiet and private conditions needed for creative and thoughtful work of all kinds.
- It can provide access to materials and resources and sources of information that are not always available in the classroom.
- It can involve parents and others in the children's work for their mutual benefit.
- It can provide opportunities and the incentive to 'find out' more and research topics with more open ended time frames.
- It can be an important part of a pupil's notes.
- It gives children valuable experience of working to deadlines and provides routines, which aid teachers and children with their respective responsibilities.
- It promotes observational skills, recording abilities, collection of information, memorisation, revision and the development of study skills.

Specifically in the Prep School:

- It provides vital extra practice in language skills and mathematics leading to consolidation and reinforcement. This includes practising key words and sounds with their family, number bonds or tables.
- It provides additional practice in reading development - the key to development in all areas of academic study.
- It provides an opportunity to enhance spelling proficiency.
- It gauges children's understanding of work learned and further promotes concentration and comprehension.

Homework is marked according to the general school marking policy. Homework completed well is acknowledged and praised. There may be issues arising from the work, which the teacher will follow up in lesson time. We recognise that pupils have individual learning styles, which means that some tasks can be completed in a number of different ways, while others demand a particular approach. Feedback is precise and positive, and is given to pupils as soon as possible after being handed in to the teacher.

Types of homework

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

We set a variety of homework activities. In the **Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1** we give children books to take home and read with their parents. We give guidance to parents on achieving 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 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 could 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 classroom reference books and also the local library, as well as the Internet and CD-ROMs.

At **Key Stage 2** we continue to give children the sort of homework activities already outlined, but we expect them to do more tasks independently. We set literacy and / or numeracy homework routinely each week, and we expect the children to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school through practice at home.

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.

Amount of homework

As they move through the school, we increase the amount of homework that we give the children. We expect children in Key Stage 1 to spend approximately one hour a week doing homework, although this may well include reading with a parent. We expect children in years 3 and 4 to spend approximately 15 minutes per night on homework, and children in years 5 and 6 to spend approximately 30 minutes per night.

The amount of homework at **Key Stage 3 and 4** is as follows:

Subject	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
English Lang. & Lit.	3 x 20	3 x 30	3 x 40	4 x 45
Mathematics	2 x 20	2 x 30	2 x 40	2 x 45
Science	2 x 20	2 x 30	2 x 40	2 x 45
French	2 x 20	2 x 30	2 x 30	3 x 30
Geography	2 x 20	2 x 30	2 x 30	2 x 45
History	2 x 20	2 x 30	2 x 30	2 x 45
ICT	1 x 30	1 x 30	1 x 30	1 x 60
Art	1 x 30	1 x 30	1 x 45	
Weekly total	5h 20m	7h 30m	8h 55m	11h 30m

Year 11 will have a MINIMUM of 2 hours per night Monday – Thursday plus a MINIMUM of 4 hours at the weekend.

We give senior pupils a diary where the homework is recorded, either by them, or by the teacher and we ask parents to check that work has been done and sign the diary on a regular basis, making any relevant comments if appropriate.

Prep School pupils have a reading diary where parents and staff make relevant comments.

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. When setting homework to pupils who are named on the register of special needs, we refer to those pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEPs). We value and celebrate the cultural diversity of our pupils and their families, and we appreciate the enrichment that this brings.

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.

Parents are asked to check homework note books and never hesitate to inform the form teacher if homework is taking too long or indeed if the pupil says there is no homework. A homework room is available at lunch time and in After School for Senior pupils and so it may well be that some homework has been completed then. The staff never mind parents checking.

If parents have any questions about homework, they should, in the first instance, contact the child's form or subject teacher. If their questions are of a more general nature, parents should contact Head of Senior School.

Use of ICT

The use of ICT 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 are not achieving anything worthwhile by merely downloading and printing out something that has been written by somebody else.

Consolidation and extension of work done in class for Key Stage 3 and 4 can be accessed online in the following subjects:

Kerboodle: French (Years 7 to 11) and Science (Years 10 & 11)

MyMaths: Mathematics (Years 7 to 11)

Active Learn: Science (Years 7 to 9)

Careerssoft: Years 7 to 11

Regular use of these materials greatly enhances pupils' performance and grades and parents are asked to encourage their children to take advantage of the resources.

There are many websites containing highly educational material which can have a powerful effect on children's learning. **Parents are advised always to supervise their child's access to the Internet. We encourage younger pupils to use a "safe" search engine such as Swiggle.**

Monitoring and review

The Principal and Assistant Head Teacher and Head of Prep School are responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring the implementation of this policy. They inspect samples of the pupils' work and of the teachers' planning.

This policy will be reviewed in two years, or earlier if necessary.

Signed..... Date.....