

Homework Policy

Introduction

Homework is anything that 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 children's learning. For example, a parent who spends time reading a story to their child before bedtime is helping with homework.

Rationale for homework

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 experiences 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 a successful dialogue between teachers and parents. One of the aims of our school is for children to develop as independent learners. We believe that 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. 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 as these also 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.

At Kenmore Park Infant & Nursery School we believe that: -

- an active partnership between home and school is crucial to children's learning
- children learn all the time in both structured and unstructured situations, in planned and unplanned activities, at home and at school.

Aims and Objectives

- To help home and school appreciate the learning that occurs both at home and in school and to provide links between the two;
- To give opportunities to consolidate, reinforce and extend the knowledge, skills and understanding gained in school;
- To give children time to complete work started in school;
- To help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner by undertaking some independent research and developing new interests;

- To enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development;
- To enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered in sufficient depth:
- To help children develop good work habits for the future.
- To have a clear framework for homework activities.
- To recognise that the acquisition of literacy skills is of fundamental importance.
- To encourage parents to provide opportunities out of school which support and enhance their child's learning.

Types of homework

We set a variety of homework activities. In the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 we encourage the children to read by giving them books to take home to read/share with their parents. We give guidance information to parents to help them achieve the maximum benefits from this time spent sharing a book or 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.

Other examples and suggestions for parents to help their children are outlined below:

- involving their child in active conversation and discussion
- playing games together including counting and number games
- singing and saying rhymes together
- sharing books
- reading to their child everyday
- involving their child in activities such as cooking, shopping (real life experiences with money), laying the table, writing lists, following instructions, helping with DIY!
- using the public library
- visiting places of interest
- collecting items of interest connected with school projects and bringing them to school

- talking about routines at home to help improve concept of time and develop the skills to tell the time.

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, although this may well include reading with parent. We expect children in Year 3 to spend approximately 15-20 minutes per night on homework. (see types of homework set in different year groups Appendix 1 and homework schedule Appendix 2). This is in line with the DCFS guidelines that were issued in 1998.

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 with special educational needs we refer to the Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

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 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 role model.

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 Year Group Leaders.

Finally, if they wish to make a complaint about the 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. This is done by the committee of the governing body that deals with the curriculum issues. Parents complete a questionnaire during the school's OFSTED inspection. Our governing body pays careful consideration to any concern that is raised at the 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.

Signed: R.K. Mahil-Pooni

Date: September 2016

Date of next policy review: September 2018

Framework for Homework Activities

Nursery

Shared Reading - Parents are asked to read to and with their child everyday.
A meeting is held to explain the project.

Handwriting - Parents are asked to encourage their child to use pens, pencils, crayon etc for drawing and writing.
Information about letter formation is provided.

Reception

Sharing Reading and Handwriting continue.

Maths - Parents are asked to help their child with practical mathematical activities. A maths games library is made available to parents and pupils.

Reading - Parents are asked to help their child with initial sounds & learn specific words.

Discussions - Parents are asked to discuss particular topics with their child. The topics are linked to different areas of the curriculum.

Year 1

Sharing Reading, Handwriting, Maths and Specific Reading

Spelling - Children are given a list of words each week to learn to spell. A spelling test is held each week.

Diaries - Children are asked to keep Holiday Diaries on Particular themes, eg recording the weather each day.

Topic work - Children are asked to complete work in other parts of the curriculum in a learning log.



Year 2

Weekly Spellings List.

- Reading - Children choose library books to read in their classroom. They can change these on a weekly basis. Guided reading books are sent home and daily reading is changed once a week. A relevant comprehension sheet may be included.

English/Mathematics

- Homework is alternated between English & mathematics weekly with occasional pieces of Topic/Science homework.

- Tables - Children start to practise multiplication tables at home.

- Topic Work - Children are asked to undertake some research at home and to record their findings in their learning log for sharing at school.

Learning Logs have replaced previous work sent home in the form of worksheets to reinforce mathematics, English & curriculum topics and holiday research work. All these activities are now incorporated in the Learning Logs which are differentiated by outcome and guided by a key learning objective.