

# Woodthorpe J.I. School

## School Homework Policy

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 Homework is voluntary.

### 2 Rationale for homework

- 2.1 Homework is an 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 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; Children can therefore benefit greatly from the complementary learning that they do at home. Indeed we see homework as an important example of cooperation between teachers and parents. One of the aims of our teaching is for children 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.
- 2.2 Homework plays 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 they develop their interests and skills to the full only when parents encourage them to make maximum use of the opportunities available outside school.

### 3 Aims and objectives

- 3.1 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 consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school, and to allow children to practice skills taught in lessons; and
  - to help children develop good work habits for the future.

## **4 Types of homework**

- 4.1** Staff and pupils regard homework as an integral part of the curriculum - it is planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of learning.
- 4.2** 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 also ask that they learn phonemes and the spelling of tricky words. In Key Stage 1 children are asked to learn mathematical tables as part of their homework. We give guidance to parents on achieving the maximum benefit from this time spent reading with their child. Sometimes we ask children to talk about a topic at home prior to studying it in school. 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.
- 4.3** At Key Stage 2 we continue to give children the sort of homework activities outlined in paragraph 4.2, but we expect them to do more tasks independently. We set literacy and numeracy homework routinely each week and research projects in different curriculum areas as appropriate. We expect the children to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school through practice at home. Children are encouraged to use the internet and books to undertake research. 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. Year 5 and 6 have a programme of homework that also includes Science, Humanities and research/presentation projects. This supports the transition of Year 6 to Year 7 in Secondary School.
- 4.4** It is not expected that teachers mark homework. When homework is marked it will be in accordance with the general school marking policy. Parents are encouraged to review the homework with their child. Teachers will acknowledge homework, where possible, so parents know it has been seen.
- 4.5** 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.

## **5 Amount of homework**

- 5.1** 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 set homework. This includes reading with a parent/carer. We expect children in years 3 and 4 to spend approximately 15–20 minutes per night on set homework, and children in years 5 and 6 to spend approximately 30 minutes per night. This is in line with the DfES guidelines that were issued in 1998.

## **6 Inclusion and homework**

- 6.1** 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.

## **7. Rewards and Sanctions**

- 7.1** Staff can reward good quality homework to boost children's self-esteem. Rewards should be simple and effective to ensure children understand why they are being rewarded and also that this is clear to parents/carers. Rewards will not be graded by quality or quantity of homework done. Staff will continue to encourage the children to complete their homework and will give them extra time, e.g. at break time, if they wish to complete homework.
- 7.2** Staff will not sanction children for not completing or bringing in their homework, other than in Year 6 where the children are preparing for secondary school. We want to ensure that children's self-esteem is not damaged by anxiety about their homework.

## **7 The role of parents**

- 7.1** 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, using the class blog if available, by enabling their child to visit the library regularly, and by discussing the work that their child is doing.
- 7.2** If parents have any 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 headteacher. Finally, if they wish to make a complaint about the school's homework policy, or the way it is implemented, parents should contact the governing body.

## **8 Use of ICT**

- 8.1** 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.
- 8.2** There are many websites containing highly educational material which can have a powerful effect on children's learning. However there are also websites with unreliable and inappropriate information. Therefore we advise parents to always to supervise their child's access to the Internet.
- 8.3** We discourage children from bringing information on disks, CDs or memory sticks in to use on the school network because of the risk of viruses. However, when appropriate, a teacher might suggest that a child's work is e-mailed to the teacher at school using their school e-mail address.

**8.4** Each class has a blog to support the children in accessing homework.

**9 Monitoring and review**

**9.1** The Senior Leadership team is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of this policy.

**9.2** It is the responsibility of our governing body to agree and review the school homework policy. This is done by the committee of the governing body that deals with curriculum issues. Our governing body pays careful consideration to any concern that is raised by any parent.

**9.3** This policy will be reviewed in three years, or earlier if necessary.

Signed: .....

Approved: 16 June 2016

Review: June 2017