



## West Dean C of E Primary School - Homework Policy



At West Dean we value homework and the role that families play in the holistic education of children. Our principles are that homework should be meaningful, at the correct level for each child, and enable them to consolidate, prepare for and take the 'next steps' in their learning. Teacher feedback should be helpful in this, and manageable. We offer a range of resources, workshops and support so that learning at home is approached in a way which is compatible with the classroom methods.

The work we ask children to do at home is often 'differentiated'/bespoke - set at the level the child is working at. Much of the homework is not set for the whole class, although this is appropriate at times. Each class teacher sends detailed information home about how parents and carers can support home learning. Systems and expectations differ in each class, but many aspects are consistent to all: these aspects are stated below:



### Reading at Home

Reading regularly for pleasure and growing into life-long readers is very important to us all. We encourage children to read books which are broadly at a level which extends their reading without making the book impossible to tackle on their own. Adult support in the selection of books is given where appropriate and children grow in independence in this, as in all aspects of learning. Less confident readers should read to an adult frequently: a little and often is our recommendation, and expectations will vary according to the class and the individual, but at least three times a week is our minimum expectation for all children.



More confident and skilled readers may read when parents and carers should discuss the higher order reading skills, as well as reading **Reading to your children** is always worthwhile beyond. Each class will have a reading record



y independently, and this is the book, addressing the child from time to time. out primary school and pleted for/with your child:



this is an important way of monitoring pupils' reading habits and preferences and we value parental support in this.

We celebrate home reading with praise and with **Book Worm Awards**. Our Book Worm Award is a collaborative award scheme where a year group can earn stickers to complete a chart: a full chart results in the children choosing a new reading book for the classroom.



Children also have **library books** which they can read, independently or with support, at home or at school. This is a lovely free choice opportunity.



It is also important for children to see other adults reading and to celebrate the written word all around us - even in supermarkets, road signs, on phones and tablets etc.



### Spelling and Phonics



We have an explorative approach to learning how to spell, rather than merely learning lists of words for tests. Any homework tasks will reflect this approach. As we use a range of skills in reading and spelling, the range of words we learn reflects this: some words follow spelling patterns and rules; some are 'high frequency' words which do not follow patterns but are vital to fluent reading; some are specific to topics and help children to understand the current learning and explain their own thinking; and some words may be generated from the children's own errors.



For each year group, there are statutory spelling lists which we work on with the children. These national curriculum lists can be found on the website in the parent section, as expectations for learning in each year.

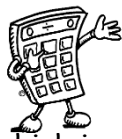


### Target Homework

All children have maths and English targets by teachers who are very familiar with the next steps which will move the children on in their writing. Target homework aims to enable pupils to close 'gaps' between the child's learning and their next steps. They are shared and discussed as individuals, in groups and as a whole class.



Greater awareness of their next steps means that children are more focused on the purpose of the activities, understand their learning better and achieve better results. For example, even in the same class, some children may be working on writing reported speech with inverted commas, whilst some children may be learning when to use commas or question marks, and others may be learning about verbs and adverbs. Support from home is vital to help children reaching the next steps in their learning.



### Maths Homework

Children have maths to practise which is at a level appropriate to them: sometimes these targets and this work is set specifically for one child, to help overcome a barrier to learning and sometimes a target is appropriate to a group of children. We focus heavily on mental maths skills, number work and the application of these skills.



x7



x9

**Maths Matters Challenges:** this progressive system of challenging children with their number skills builds up mental strategies which support the children's calculation work throughout school. The challenges are done in school, but completed challenges are sent home so that grown-ups at home can support too. The progression is available on the website, along with our calculation progressions, to support home learning. We use concrete, visual and abstract methods to teach calculation and the use of precise mathematical vocabulary is also key in children's understanding of mathematical processes



To support this, children are encouraged to learn and practise their **multiplication and division facts** regularly. (The **Sumdog** website is useful for practising selected skills.)

### Research or Topic homework



The more open ended research or topic homework is designed to give children a different opportunity, to have their independence celebrated and to give them a chance to explore an aspect at home. Often, their work will then be celebrated and displayed or presented to the class, thus helping their classmates develop a greater understanding of the subject.



We know that a child who can explain something to someone else has a good understanding of the subject, so we value all the talk at home and in school, almost as much as the finished product!

We hope that grown-ups at home are able to support these pieces of work, although we set them with the intention that they can be completed independently, but obviously, the more you can engage with this, the better.



School staff are always available to support with this. Wednesday afternoons after school are good times to pop in for a chat.

