

The Nethersole C of E Academy
Homework Policy

Introduction

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 to support the children's learning.

Rationale for homework

We see homework as an important example of cooperation between teachers and parents/carers. One of the aims of our teaching is for children to reach their full potential, and we believe that doing homework is one of the ways in which children can revisit and build on learning in school as well as practising and improving important skills for example reading.

Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of homework are:

- to enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development;
- to promote cooperation between home and school in supporting each child's learning;
- to enable some aspects of the curriculum to be further explored;
- to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school, and to allow children to practice skills taught in lessons;
- to help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future.

Types of homework

Reading at home

Part of the children's weekly homework will be an expectation that they will read regularly at home.

Foundation Stage (Reception)

We ask that parents listen to their children read around five times a week and a minimum of three times – children will regularly be given books to take home each week. Parents should sign the home reading diary. We also believe that parents should read books to their child. Sharing books is just as valuable in aiding a child's progress in reading as is your child reading to you or to their teachers. Reading isn't restricted to books – children can be encouraged and supported to read in different ways: food labels; road names; their own name and names of their family members, friend or pets; shop names or any other words in their home/ immediate environment.

Reception children also have a phonics book which is updated each week with the letters/ sounds that have been taught that week. Parents should help their child to practise writing each letter and can draw and label objects beginning with each sound. Books are collected in on a Thursday and returned with new sounds on a Friday. Once the children are settled in school, they will also receive a set of high frequency words. Children will have to learn each of the words before they progress. Staff will check their sight word recognition each week. Parents should encourage their children to count and explore numbers in their home/ immediate environment e.g counting steps up the stairs; counting animals or objects; looking for numbers in the environment; helping in the home (counting cutlery on the table or items to be used in cooking); when out shopping (counting two apples in the shopping trolley) etc. These can be made into games to encourage a child to join in.

Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and Year 2)

We ask parents to support their child through home learning. This includes aiming to read daily for about fifteen minutes, and as a minimum 3 times per week (remember this can include sharing books and you reading to your child). Parents should listen to children read, sign the home reading diary and occasionally make comments about how a child is getting on. We have included in these home reading diaries a range

of activities to deepen your child's understanding of what they have read. These are optional and can be done independently if appropriate or with your support.

Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6)

Children should continue to read five times per week but as a minimum three in key stage 2 children can contribute to signing their reading diary as long as parents also sign these regularly and oversee a child's reading. We aim to help develop your child's love of reading and curiosity about books and words so it is essential that children continue to read regularly and be encouraged to explore a wide range of texts. When a child is reading confidently and fluently in Years 5 and 6 the parent could discuss the child's book with them, rather than listening to them read (these discussions should be added to the reading diary).

Spelling and phonics

We believe that spelling is a life skill that children should master at an early age. For some children the priority will be for them to learn their phonics, before moving on to spellings. From Year 1 to Year 6 children will be given a weekly spelling / phonics list of words to learn. In Years 1 and 2, we will concentrate on the example words in the spelling section of the 2014 National Curriculum, supplemented with words from the list of high frequency words. In years 3-6 the priority will be to learn the word lists from the 2014 National Curriculum, these may be supplemented with spellings from patterns being taught that week in class. From Year 1 to Year 4 the word lists will be on printed sheets sent home. In years 5-6 it is likely that the children will write out their own spellings in their book.

Mental maths facts

At the beginning of every half term, parents will receive a letter that details the mental maths facts that their child will need to learn during that half term. These areas of mental maths may include number bonds, addition and subtraction facts, or times tables. Each week, during that half term, children in all year groups will have a weekly test based on the focus for that half term or other areas identified for development. This is to ensure that they are learning to apply these facts in different ways. Children learning times-tables will be issued with a laminated sheet with the multiplication facts on.

Literacy / numeracy homework

In addition to reading, spellings and times-tables, children will be given another piece of more 'formal' homework to undertake at home once a week. This will alternate between a literacy and numeracy focus. In Year 6 this will be weekly, in preparation for secondary education.

Weekly schedule:

The following weekly schedule will be used across school:

Fridays – Alternating piece of literacy / numeracy work (to be returned to school a week the following Wednesday). Work to be undertaken in the child's 'homework book'. Teachers or pupils will mark this book.

It is anticipated that the following time should ideally be set aside for homework per week

Mental maths and spellings – 15-20 mins per day

Reading – 15-20 mins per day

Literacy / numeracy homework – half - 1 hour a week.

Feedback

Homework is always acknowledged and, according to the task, is either marked or used in class to support learning. For example, whereas a maths task would be marked according to the school marking policy a topic research task may be shared in the lesson or used as part of a group activity. 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 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.

Pupils who complete their homework each week will be rewarded with house points and acknowledged in collective worship .

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.

Other homework

To ensure children 'keep up' with learning in class teachers may send home additional homework from learning that day to help your child develop a secure understanding of what has been taught that day. To ensure children are well prepared for and achieve their best in SATs teachers can also set additional work.

To support learning about a topic/theme teachers may occasionally (once per theme) set additional homework to support learning in school.

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers have a vital role to play in their child's education, and homework is an important part of this process. We ask parents and carers to encourage their child to complete the homework. 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 and carers 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. If your child is refusing to undertake their homework, please liaise with their class teacher, who will be able to make suggestions on how to improve this.

Ideally parents should read with their children every day to help them develop a love of books and stories and help them to grow in confidence. We ask parents and carers to sign their child's Reading Record to show that they have heard their child read and discussed their books with them on at least three occasions during each week.

If parents and carers have any questions about homework, they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher.

Use of ICT

The child's safety is paramount in all matters regarding use of the internet and we advise parents and carers to always supervise their child's access to the internet.

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 copying, pasting and printing out something that has been written by somebody else.

There are many websites containing highly educational material which can have a powerful effect on children's learning. We discourage children from bringing computer disks or memory sticks into school, 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.

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 curriculum issues.