

BISHOP WOOD C OF E JUNIOR 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.

2 Rationale for homework

- 2.1 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 document "*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 greater depth
 - to provide educational experiences not possible in school
 - to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school, and to allow children to practice skills taught in lessons
 - to help children develop good work habits for the future.
 - to give opportunities for children to follow up class work in out-of-school hours.
 - to enable parents to take a greater part in their child's education.

- to prepare children for the secondary transfer stage by introducing the concept of regular work to be completed in a given time.
- to ensure, where appropriate, feedback is given to children about homework.

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. For example we may 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 as part of the induction pack. We may also ask 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. We may ask children to prepare a talk to deliver in class. 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 not only the school library but also the local library, as well as the Internet and CD-ROMs.
- 4.3** As the children progress throughout Key Stage 2 we expect them to do more tasks independently. We set literacy and numeracy homework routinely each week, and we expect the children to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school through practice at home. 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.
- 4.4** 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.
- 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.
- 4.6** The school has purchased access to an online Maths support package. The children can access this from home and practise all aspects of Maths. It includes lessons that can be looked at if homework is proving tricky and a strategy needs to be revised to get the answers. It also includes games that can be played to improve skills. The work begins at Level 1 and moves up so Level 1 is the easiest. The children know the username and password and this is communicated to parents at the Welcome Evenings at the beginning of the school year.

5 Organisation

- Class teachers should communicate the homework expectations for the year to parents at the start of the September term
- Children are expected to use their homework diary to make a written record of what is expected, to take home.
- Homework should be given at regular intervals to develop good work habits.

- Children should be encouraged to attempt the work but to stop after the given time if they experience problems, thereby avoiding excessive time on the work. Parents should communicate any problems to the class teacher in the homework diary.
- Normally homework would not be set for the next school day.
- Parents are advised to supervise any sites visited for internet homework.
- Electronic homework can be received through the homework email account which is homelearning@bishopwood.herts.sch.uk

6 Amount of homework

- 6.1** Please aim to complete your child's reading record three times a week. Effective reading underpins success in all other areas of the curriculum.
- 6.2** In Year 3 a new home learning wall will be sent home every half term containing a variety of activities. In addition Mathematics and spelling homework will be set every week.

In Year 4 a learning wall will be sent home each half term containing Maths, Literacy and topic activities. Big Maths targets are sent home along with spelling lists for the half term.

In Year 5 cross curricular learning walls are issued every half term. Maths homework is set weekly. Spelling and grammar activities are set fortnightly. Big Maths targets are sent home weekly and topic vocabulary is sent home in the link books.

In Year 6 there has to be a strong emphasis on preparation for the SATs tests at the end of the year so each week comprehension, spelling, grammar and Mathematics homework is set. "My Maths" is also consistently used as part of Year 6 homework.

7 Inclusion and homework

- 7.1** 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.

8 The role of parents

- 8.1** 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, by enabling their child to visit the library regularly, and by discussing the work that their child is doing.
- 8.2** We ask parents to check the home-school diary at least once a week, and to sign it as requested.
- 8.3** 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 homework policy, or the way it is implemented, parents should contact the governing body.

9 Use of ICT

- 9.1** 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.
- 9.2** 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.
- 9.3** When appropriate, a teacher might suggest that a child's work is e-mailed to the teacher at school. This must be done through the appropriate e-mail account advised by the teacher.

10 Monitoring and review

- 10.1** Teachers will keep records of the work set and children's response. Parents of children who do not complete their homework on a regular basis should be contacted. Teachers may ask pupils to complete homework at break time.
- 10.2** Homework will be assessed along with class work in the same subject.
- 10.3** Members of the Senior Management Team are responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy. Time will be allocated to inspect samples of the children's homework and the use of the homework diary.
- 10.4** 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. Our governing body may, at any time, request from our headteacher a report on the way homework is organised in our school.
- 10.5** This policy will be reviewed in two years, or earlier if necessary.