

Bishop Ridley CE Primary School

Homework Policy

Bishop Ridley Primary School's homework policy is an integral part of the school's curriculum and is designed to help children reach their full potential. We believe that homework is a valuable way of consolidating what has been learned in school as well as actively involving parents in the education of their children.

There is no doubt that parents who are involved in their children's learning can help them to make faster progress, to gain confidence and to achieve better results.

'Homework' refers to any work or activity which children are asked to do out of school, either on their own or with parents or carers. Homework does not just mean formal exercises carried out by children without help from adults. Particularly in the case of younger children, it is the involvement of parents and carers in joint activities, which can be very beneficial and which is most valuable in promoting children's learning. We appreciate the support that parents give to their children at home and rely on that support to ensure that children make good progress.

We believe the main purposes of homework are:

- To develop our links with parents and carers
- To help parents understand what their children are learning in school
- To help parents understand the approaches and techniques used in school
- To give children the opportunity to practise what they have learnt, particularly in literacy and Mathematics
- To develop self-discipline and perseverance
- To help children plan their use of time wisely and to develop confidence
- To develop the 'homework habit' in preparation for secondary school
- To make use of all kinds of learning resources outside school (including libraries and museums)
- To extend and enrich school learning

We aim to:

- Set and monitor homework on a regular basis
- Ensure a consistent approach throughout the school
- Encourage children to develop increasing independence and a sense of personal responsibility
- Meet the additional needs of pupils
- Make expectations clear to children, parents and other carers
- Extend the opportunities provided for learning
- Improve understanding between home and school
- Provide activities that encourage parents and carers to work with their children
- Develop responsibility for home study through a well-planned programme of homework, which prepares children for transfer to secondary school.

The purpose and amount of homework change as children get older. Children in the **Foundation Stage** start to bring home reading books in the reception year.

In **Key Stage 1** homework might include short activities, word games, spellings, maths games and activities, topic-related activities and reading together. Weekly spellings to bring home are introduced during the course of year 1, as soon as the class teacher feels the children are ready for them. Similarly, Maths homework is phased in gradually, so that the children bring home Maths activities once a fortnight by year 2.

Emphasis is given to the importance of parents and carers reading with their child. Since children need regular opportunities to practise reading and to listen to others reading, we recommend that parents and carers read with their child for between ten and twenty minutes per day. In Reception and Key Stage 1 a contact book is maintained for comments to be made concerning reading and other homework activities.

In **Key Stage 2** the main emphasis of homework is to provide opportunities for children to develop the skills of independent learning. By the time a child reaches year 6 their homework will cover a wide range of tasks and curriculum areas and will include opportunities for personal study. At Key Stage 2 the children have a reading record card for use with our reading schemes; they also have a reading record (half size format) for recording 'free reading' in which parents may make comments, thereby acting as a contact book. This book is regularly monitored by the class teacher.

The amount of homework may vary from time to time and the precise content and quantity is left to the professional judgement of the teacher. As far as is practicable, children in parallel classes will be set similar homework.

Not all homework needs to be formally marked and teachers will use many different ways of providing feedback to children other than through written comments.

The time spent on homework will be:

Reception no set amount of time is stipulated, although parents should spend short and frequent periods reading with their child (listening to, reading with and to their child, sharing texts for enjoyment, information etc.), practising handwriting and other manipulative skills, and other practical activities

Years 1 & 2 approximately one hour per week
(reading, spelling, other literacy work including handwriting, mental arithmetic, number bonds, number work and topic related tasks)

Years 3 & 4 approximately 1 to 1.5 hours per week
(reading, spelling, other literacy work, mental arithmetic and Maths work, multiplication tables, science, topic-related tasks, researching information, reading in preparation for lessons)

Years 5 & 6 approximately 1.5 to 2 hours per week
(continued emphasis on numeracy and literacy but also including a wider range of subjects, including opportunities for personal study, researching information, reading in preparation for lessons, written assignments, weekly science homework in year 6 and revising for Key Stage 2 SATs in English, Maths and Science)

Daily reading is also to be encouraged, either as part of the homework set or in addition to it.

Children will normally be given homework on a weekly basis, set on a Friday for the following Friday, although this may vary on occasions (e.g. at the beginning and end of each term). Also at Key Stage 2 formal English homework will be set once a fortnight, alternating with Maths homework to enable staff to mark work and give feedback to pupils.

Homework will not be given in the case of children being taken out of school for family holidays during term time.

If a child is absent from school due to long-term sickness (i.e. more than 10 days) then the school will set appropriate work for the child to undertake at home. For shorter periods of illness homework will not normally be provided.

For most activities only a pencil, ruler and eraser will be required, which the children are expected to provide themselves. Additional resources (e.g. squared paper) would normally be provided by the school.

Much of the homework set will reinforce and enrich the curriculum. We send home a termly topic letter at the beginning of each term. These are designed to inform parents and carers of the general content of the curriculum for that term and suggest ways in which they can support their child at home (e.g. through additional research, recommended websites and visits to places of interest), thereby reinforcing, enriching and extending their learning beyond the classroom.

An important part of the learning process is finding out something new. Museums, places of interest and libraries are good sources of information, whilst we also recognise the wealth of information available on the internet. However, simply downloading texts, printing them and presenting them as personal research will not normally be acceptable. Any information, whether gleaned from books, computers or wherever, needs to be understood by children and presented in an original way, not copied word for word.

Special Educational Needs

The planning of homework will take account of the special educational needs of some children. This will include:

- Clear instructions and guidance
- Opportunity for success
- A variety of suitable tasks

Each class teacher is responsible for ensuring that the homework set broadly matches the capabilities of children. Sufficient time will be allowed for the homework to be completed.

The role of parents and carers is to:

- Provide a suitably quiet place in which children can do their homework
- Make sure that sufficient time is allocated for homework
- Check that children understand what they have to do
- Support children in the completion of their homework
- Demonstrate that they value homework
- Encourage their children with their homework
- Participate in the homework when required.

Whilst recognising that some parents choose to provide their children with out-of-school tuition, we expect that, as the main provider of our children's education, homework set by the school must take priority.

At the same time, we believe that homework need not, and should not, get in the way of other beneficial after-school activities, such as sport, music and clubs of all kinds.

We also believe that co-operation between home and school is of immense value to children. We are not asking or expecting parents to be teachers but we do know that where parents and teachers work together then children's learning benefits considerably.

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