

MAPLE PRIMARY SCHOOL



HOMEWORK POLICY

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Introduction

In order that our pupils can attain the highest standard (spiritual, moral, cultural and academic), we recognise the crucial importance of an active educational partnership between home and school. Homework is just one of the ways in which we seek to foster this partnership. Homework encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents to support children's learning.

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 family activities, along with participating in various school-based extra-curricular clubs and out-of-school clubs and those 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 that they develop their interests and skills to the full only when parents/carers spend quality time with them and encourage them to make maximum use of the opportunities available outside school.

Aims and Objectives

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 and partnership between home and school in supporting each child's learning, giving parents an insight into their child's schoolwork
- to enable some aspects of the curriculum to be further explored independently
- to provide educational experiences and access to resources not found in school (public libraries, local museums etc.)
- to consolidate and reinforce the learning taking place in school and to allow children to practise skills taught in lessons

- to provide opportunities for individualised work and development skills of independent learning
- to provide a context for pupil/parent interaction
- to develop confidence

Homework Expectations

Homework should not be a chore, but children should see it as an extension of their schoolwork. There may be occasions when some tasks are more challenging or difficult than usual as homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment.

At the start of every term teachers send home a newsletter which outlines the curriculum and organisational arrangements for their particular year group. This newsletter will include suggestions and/or arrangements for homework activities. At the beginning of the academic year, expectations are shared with parents at the year group meeting.

Reception Class:

In Reception parents are asked to read daily with their child and write a comment in the child's Reading Diary. A weekly Maths activity is sent home to reinforce prior learning or to pre-tutor forthcoming topics.

Key Stage 1:

In Year 1 and Year 2 daily reading opportunities are still highly encouraged. Parents are asked to record in the child's reading diary. Weekly spellings will be sent home with each child to learn for an 'end-of -week' test. A weekly optional Maths -focused activity, which may be a worksheet, game or ICT activity, will be sent home. This will be linked to the children's learning in class. Homework involving aspects of grammar will be sent home as the year progresses.

As they move through the school we increase the amount of homework that we give the children. We expect children in Reception and Key Stage 1 to read with their parents on a daily basis and for parents to read to their children. As the children from Year 2 upwards become more proficient with their reading, regular independent reading is expected, although parents we still strongly encourage to hear their children read and read to them. There are optional English / Maths activities set in Key Stage 1.

Key Stage 2:

Homework is compulsory in Key Stage 2, and for those pupils requiring additional support a weekly lunchtime club will be held. If homework is not handed in on the allocated day, the pupils concerned will be expected to complete the work under supervision during their lunch breaks. In Key Stage 2 more formal study is given in preparation for the transition to secondary school. English books and Maths jotting books are provided and weekly tasks set in each subject.

Children may be expected to do some of the following activities:

- Reading / sharing books for enjoyment and practice, reading for research
- Looking for things or finding out information to do with a class topic
- Learning sequences (e.g. tables, spellings) for quick recall
- Preparing for classroom discussions, talks or debates through sharing ideas at home
- Learning words for songs and plays for a performance or presentation
- The vast majority of KS2 maths is on-line. Pupils are encouraged to make jottings and support homework with written notes

In Years 5 and 6 the children will also undertake a more extensive research project, meeting specific criteria (e.g. mountains and rivers / study of a decade in history).

In lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4) the children are expected to spend approximately one hour per week on homework activities. In Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6) the children are expected to spend approximately two and a half to three hours per week.

This time includes sections from the English homework books and Maths exercises, which are predominantly on-line in KS2, learning spellings and tables, topic research, reading and other tasks (see above).

With the exception of Year 6 pupils and those children having 1 to 1 tuition, homework will not be set during the school holidays. However, in the holidays all pupils are encouraged to continue with their reading and tables practice; and in the Summer Holiday the pupils are invited to complete an optional learning task. (Previous examples have included writing a postcard to send to the Headteacher and keeping a holiday diary).

Hearing Impaired Unit:

The hearing impaired pupils have specific weekly homework, consolidating learning covered in the Unit. This may include Maths, English and practical or 'talk about' activities. Books are sent home and parents are asked to read with their children on a daily basis.

Reading

Reading at home is of vital importance to enable a pupil to make good progress in all their learning. This should include a range of fiction and non-fiction texts, which may be used for individual research tasks, set by the class teacher. Children reading to and with their parents/carers, along with listening to their parents/carers read to them, (and listening to books through electronic media) are all enjoyable and vital activities. Discussion, with parents, about understanding of the text, is crucial at all ages and stages.

A recommended reading list for each year group has been published on the Classrooms Section of the school's website.

From Reception to Year 6 a reading diary is given to every child, which enables the children to record books they have read at home with their parents/carers and independently. The books will include their individual reading books, guided reading books and any other books enjoyed at home. Guidelines for parents when sharing books with children are given on the inside cover of the diaries.

The role of the parent/carer in hearing individual reading is of paramount importance. It supplements and complements the work that is going on in school, in class and/or group lessons. It cannot be stressed enough that the individual time a parent/carer can give to a child is vital.

As the children progress through the school and the texts become longer, children will want periods of reading alone in addition to practising reading aloud with expression.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs

We set homework for all children as a normal part of school life. We try to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to the ability of the child. If a child has special needs, we endeavour to adapt any tasks set so that all children can

contribute in a positive way. For more able children, more challenging tasks are set.

The role of parents and carers in supporting pupils

We strongly believe that if parents/carers and teachers work together on homework it will benefit all pupils' learning. We are asking parents/carers to help and actively support their children in the on-going learning process.

In general terms we ask that parents and carers:

- Provide a supportive environment in which the child can do their homework
- Make it clear to pupils that they value homework, and support the school in explaining how it can help their learning
- Encourage pupils and praise them when they have completed their home study
- Help extend their child's reading by providing a range of fiction and non-fiction (including comics, magazines and newspapers) and encouraging them to use libraries and the internet
- Play board games - e.g. Monopoly, Scrabble, Boggle, Hangman, Ludo, dice games; and games on i-pads/computers
- Maximise the learning opportunities of any visits/holidays in school holidays by geographical/historical discussion, diary recording / making of scrap books, map reading and handling pocket money.

Feedback for pupils, parents, carers and teachers

In Foundation Stage to Year 3 the Reading Diary should be used by teachers and parents/carers to record reading opportunities at both school and home. Teachers will use the reading diary to provide feedback of individual progress and details of weekly guided reading activities.

In the case of work they do on their own, pupils will receive appropriate feedback from the teachers / TAs. This could take the form of discussion with the child/children following a task or a written comment.

Homework activities often provide opportunities for children to develop a particular interest or to extend a field of learning. This is to be encouraged by both parents/carers.

Parents are also encouraged to indicate the level of support given on a homework task as this is helpful to the teachers/TAs.

Use of ICT

A copy of the school's E-Safety policy may be found on the school's website. Children's safety is paramount in all matters regarding use of the internet and we advise parents/carers to always supervise their child's access to the internet; and have appropriate 'child safe' facilities in place on their home computers.

There are many websites containing highly educational material which can have a powerful effect on children's learning. 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. This is more worthwhile than merely copying, pasting and printing out something that has been written by somebody else.

We discourage children from bring memory sticks into school, because of the risk of viruses. However, when appropriate a teacher might suggest that a child's work is emailed to the admin account.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the Curriculum and Standards Committee of the Governing Body to agree and then monitor the school's Homework Policy. The Homework Policy will be reviewed every four years, or earlier if required, by the teaching staff.

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