

St. Maxentius C.E. Primary School



Homework Policy

Introduction

Homework is anything that 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 children's learning. For example, a parent who spends time reading a story to their child before bedtime is helping with homework.

Rationale for homework

Homework is an 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 1997 White Paper, 'Excellence in Schools', where homework was seen as 'an essential part of good education'. We recognise that the time and resources available limit the educational experience that any school by itself can provide; children benefit greatly therefore from the mutual support of parents and teachers in encouraging them to learn both at home and at school. Indeed we see homework as an important way of establishing a successful dialogue between teachers and parents. One of the aims of our school is for children to develop as independent learners. We believe that homework is one of the main ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning. Homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. 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 wide range of out-of-school clubs and organisations that play an important part in the lives of many children. We are well aware that children spend more time at home than at school, and we believe they develop their skills, interests and talents to the full only when parents encourage them to make maximum use of the experiences and opportunities that are available outside of 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 a partnership between home and school in supporting each child's learning;
- to enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered in sufficient depth;
- to provide educational experiences not possible in school;
- to consolidate and reinforce learning done in school and to allow children to practise skills taught in lessons;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future.

Types of homework

We set a variety of homework activities. In the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 we encourage the children to read by giving them books to take home to read with their parents. We give guidance information to parents to help them achieve the maximum benefit from this time spent reading with their child. We ask children to bring objects and artefacts into school. Sometimes we ask children to talk about a topic at home prior to studying it in school. For example, in the history topic on toys, we ask children to find out what toys were popular when their grandparents were young and, if possible, to bring examples into school to show the other children. 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 would benefit from spending further time on it. For maths homework, children are given specific homework to learn number bonds and to begin to learn to tell the time at home with parental support. Children are given a knowledge organiser for each topic to practise using the vocabulary they will require for their topic.

At Key Stage 2 we set reading (home-school readers) and maths homework (oral work based on learning multiplication tables using Times Tables Rock Stars to motivate them), mental maths skills each week and we ask parents to teach their child to tell the time as this is best achieved by telling the time regularly throughout the day.

Children are given a knowledge organiser for each topic to practise saying, reading and writing the vocabulary they will require for their topic. 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.

Optional or additional homework could include a small research project but this would not routinely be asked of children. Occasionally, they may be set a short task, such as finding the meanings of vocabulary.

Amount of homework

We increase the amount of homework that we give the children as they move through the school. We expect Key Stage 1 children to spend approximately one hour throughout the week doing homework, although this may well include reading with a parent. We expect children in years 3 and 4 to spend approximately 15–20 minutes on two to three evenings per week on homework and children in years 5 and 6 to spend approximately 30 minutes on two to three evenings per week.

The school operates a homework club which is not openly available to all pupils but is available for pupils who do not have the facilities or support at home to complete their homework.

Inclusion

The policy of the school is that all pupils are entitled to equality of access to the full range of educational experiences available, including homework. All homework set will take account of the range of abilities but with a recognition that we are aiming for all pupils to meet age related expectations unless there is a specific reason why a child would not be able to achieve this.

It is the responsibility of all teachers and support staff to ensure that pupils are taught and assessed appropriately according to their needs. In addition to the principles and practice described in this policy, the school undertakes the procedures recommended by the DfES Special Educational Needs Code of practice to ensure that parents and pupils are fully involved in all decision making and support programmes.

Equal Opportunities

All pupils will have access to homework and will be treated equally regardless of

race, gender (natural or reassigned), disability, religion or belief, cultural background ,sexual orientation and age. It is the responsibility of staff to promote good practice in equal opportunities and ensure that , when identifying a special need, it is an educational one and not one of language or physical difficulty.

The role of parents

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 and to check through completed work. We invite them to help their children as they feel necessary and 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.

If a child is finding homework difficult or if there is an issue when completing homework or if parents have any problems or 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 follow the school's complaints procedure.

Success Indicators

- pupils make maximum progress in their academic and social development;
- pupils develop the skills of an independent learner;
- a partnership between home and school in supporting each child's learning is promoted;
- all aspects of the curriculum are covered in sufficient depth;

- educational experiences not possible in school are provided by parents;
- learning done in school is consolidated and reinforced and allows children to practice skills taught in lessons;
- children develop good work habits for the future.

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. Parents complete a questionnaire during the school's OFSTED inspection, and our governing body pays careful consideration to any concern that is raised at that time, or in between OFSTED inspections, by any parent. Our governing body may, at any time, request from our Headteacher a report on the way homework is organised in our school.