



# **POLICY FOR HOMEWORK**

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# **EARLHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## **POLICY FOR HOMEWORK**

### **Introduction**

The government requires that all schools should have a homework policy. We believe that the setting of regular homework will better enable parents to support their children's education and strengthen the relationship between home and school.

### **Aims**

- To consolidate learning and deepen understanding.
- To support and develop the partnership between home and school through enabling parents to actively participate in their child's learning
- To encourage pupils to develop perseverance, initiative and self-discipline through independent study.
- To develop the habit of home study and life-long learning, and to ease the transition from primary to secondary education.
- To complement the requirements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study through the integrated planning of classwork and homework.
- To provide a progressive, regular and consistent approach to homework throughout the school.
- To ensure that our homework procedures are manageable, appropriate, relevant and supportive of existing systems.
- To use homework to reinforce and/or extend work covered in class; practise or consolidate skills and knowledge; prepare for future classwork.

## **Time Allocations**

There are currently no guidelines from the DfE about how much homework children should be set, in a move intended to give Head teachers greater freedom. Under the last government, guidance was issued to all schools recommending they have a policy on homework.

The guidelines suggested children aged five to seven should be set an hour a week, rising to half-an-hour a night for seven- to 11-year-olds.

There is controversy about the value of homework, with critics saying it is either ineffective or potentially harmful if the extra work is so dull that children switch off.

At Earlham homework should be set for a week so that parents can decide when it is to be done, according to individual circumstances. For example, parents of children who attend regularly at the mosque after school may prefer to have homework completed at the weekend, whereas other parents may find it easier to support children with their homework on weekday evenings. Each phase should decide what day of the week the work will be sent home and when it should be returned to school. It is important that every teacher in the phase adheres to the chosen homework pattern and that the pattern is communicated to pupils and parents so that expectations are clear to all. It may be appropriate for older pupils to occasionally receive homework that is due in the next day, to support the next day's lessons. Additional homework may also be given in preparation for SATs in year 6.

## **Homework Activities**

The following are broad guidelines for setting homework. Except for reading activities in the Early Years and Key Stage 1 and the reading records in KS1/2, which may take place more frequently, all other homework activities should be set for a week (see **Time Allocations**) In KS1, the teacher will usually print out homework requirements to be taken home, in KS2 this may also be the case but pupils may at times be expected to write down what their homework be themselves. Parents are encouraged to comment on the sheets.

All children will be expected to have an appropriate reading book to take home and the title of this will be recorded. The reading record, with comments by both staff and parents, is expected to be regularly maintained and will be monitored by SLT.

Homework may be completed on sheets (retained in a plastic folder) or in a homework book which will also be kept in the folder, depending on the nature of the activity. A small sample of homework by particular pupils will be kept each term by the teacher for monitoring purposes.

Homework should consist primarily of Literacy and Numeracy, with topic and science work being added on occasion. Homework should be related to recent or current work, to reinforce class lessons or to prepare pupils for future learning, and should be differentiated according to the needs of the pupils. There may also be ongoing work on e.g. times tables, number bonds, spellings and similar activities.

## Assessment and Feedback to Pupils and Parents

There is no expectation that homework will be marked in depth (although a teacher may choose to do so on occasion) as it is recognised that staff already devote many hours per week to marking class work. However, homework will be acknowledgement marked with a brief comment. TAs may mark homework provided that the teacher maintains an overview of the work. Children may also be encouraged to mark their own work, for example:

- The weekly spellings learned at home should be assessed through a regular test which can be marked by the pupil or another member of the class; the learning of number bonds or tables could be similarly assessed.
- An activity that is preparation for future class work may be assessed by the teacher through the contribution that the pupil makes to the lesson.
- Children may be asked to find out certain facts, say for a history lesson, which will then form the basis of a written task in the lesson.
- It may be possible for TAs to mark some types of homework, particularly in KS1, provided that the teacher maintains an overview and is able to identify pupils who are causing concern.

It may be difficult to determine the ‘right answer’ to an investigation, as it is the process that is important, not the product:

- The teacher may ask children to calculate the cost of recarpeting their bedroom. Clearly, the teacher cannot know the answer to this, but would be much more interested in discussing with the child how they went about the task.

Parents are encouraged to ask for the teacher’s advice if they are finding it difficult to support their child at home.

If any child persistently fails to complete homework tasks, the class teacher will discuss this with parents where possible or send a letter home. If this does not achieve a positive result, the parent and child will be invited to meet with the teacher and strategies to encourage the child will be discussed and agreed. The PFSW, DHT or HT may be involved if necessary.

Work that is not completed to a high standard and according to the teacher’s expectations of the child should be returned and done again. The teacher may on occasion require pupils to complete unfinished homework at playtime.

## Monitoring

Phase leaders will monitor the homework being set and standards being achieved through the scrutiny of homework workbooks or files. The head teacher/deputy head teacher/Key Stage Managers will also monitor as part of their monitoring programmes.

Teachers should keep a record of individual pupils’ completion of weekly homework.

Parents will be surveyed annually to gauge satisfaction with homework through the annual questionnaire.

This policy will be reviewed as part of the policy review cycle by the Curriculum and Standards committee. The HT will report to the Governing Body annually.

## Parents' Responsibilities

Parents should try to...



Provide somewhere quiet for your child to work, if possible away from the TV and other children. They will need a flat surface to work on.



Provide your child with a pencil, ruler, coloured pencils or crayons and a rubber.



Establish a regular time or times each week when the homework is done.



Keep homework books away from other children in the family. They belong to the one child and should be treated with respect.



Read the Homework Diary or instructions in the homework book each week so that you know what your child has to do.



Give help and support to your child. For younger children, this may mean sitting with your child and helping them to complete their homework tasks. For older children, giving help when it is requested and looking over the work when it is finished is probably best.



Complete the Parents' Comments section in the Homework Diary or write your comments about activities in the relevant section of the homework book. It is useful for the class teacher to know whether your child found the work too hard, too easy or about right, details about any particular difficulties encountered and anything interesting that you noticed.



Don't do the work for your child – class teachers want to see your child's work, not yours!



If you would like to discuss your child's homework with the class teacher, don't forget we have a regular time each week when teachers are available to meet with parents (Tuesdays from 3.25 to 4.00 p.m.).

