



St. Leonard's C.E. (VC) First School

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. For example, parents who spend time reading stories to their children before bedtime are helping with homework.

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 1997 White Paper *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 sufficient depth;
- to provide educational experiences not possible in school;
- to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school, and to allow children to practise skills taught in lessons;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future.

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.

In all year groups we give children books to take home and read with their parents or independently depending upon age and ability. We give guidance to parents on achieving the maximum benefit from this time spent reading with their child. Children are given a reading diary in which parents are encouraged to make comments about their children's reading at home.

In EYFS Phonics books are sent home on a regular basis. Children are also given tricky words to learn along with phonic activities which are linked to the sounds they are learning in class. In KS1 regular spellings are sent home usually linked to phonics activities.

At Key Stage 2 we continue to give children the sort of homework activities outlined above; but we expect them to do more tasks independently. We set literacy and numeracy homework on a regular basis, and we expect the children to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school through practice at home.

4.3

In all classes children will have a weekly learning log. Each class will have their own theme based on their current topics or this can be led by children's interest, change in season etc. This is a new initiative and the school will be holding an information session in April 2014 to explain this to parents.

4.4

Homework completed well is acknowledged and praised.

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

5 Inclusion and homework

5.1

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. When setting homework to pupils who are named on the register of special needs, we refer to those pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEPs). We also value and celebrate the cultural diversity of our pupils and their families, and we appreciate the enrichment that this brings.

6 The role of parents

6.1

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.

6.2

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 Head teacher. 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.

7 Use of ICT

7.1

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.

7.2

There are many websites containing highly educational material which can have a powerful effect on children's learning. Our school website provides links to the sites which will support the children's learning. Parents are advised always to supervise their child's access to the Internet.

7.3 Some of the most important educational software we use in school can be bought by parents on a home-user licence. This ensures that children are using age-appropriate software in their work at home. The school will supply interested parents with details.

8 Monitoring and review

8.1

The Headteacher is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of this policy.

8.2

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.

8.3 This policy will be reviewed in three years, or earlier if necessary.