

Sir John Barrow School

Homework Policy

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/carers who spend time reading stories to their children before bedtime are helping with homework.

Homework is a very important part of a child's education, and can add much to a child's development. 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/carers. 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.

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/carers encourage them to make maximum use of the opportunities available outside school.

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.

Types of homework

Staff and pupils regard homework as an integral part of the curriculum - it is planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of learning.

We set a variety of homework activities. We give children books to take home to read with their parents/carers and also ask children to learn the 'Big Maths Learn Its' (number bonds and x tables). Usually we ask children to talk about a topic at home prior to studying it in school, eg. 'talk homework' prior to the 'Big Write', or to find and collect things that we then use in a lesson. Sometimes we ask children to take home work that they have started in school, when we believe that they could benefit from spending further time on it. When we ask children to study a topic, or to research a particular subject, we encourage them to use not only the school library but also the local library, as well as the internet.

We expect children to do more tasks independently as they move through the key stages. We set literacy and numeracy homework when necessary, in order for the children to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school through practice at home. We also set homework as a means of helping the children to revise for the end of Key Stage 2 tests, as well as to ensure that prior learning has been understood.

When homework requires marking, it is done according to the general school marking policy. Homework completed well is acknowledged and praised. There may be issues arising from the work, which the teacher will follow up in lesson time.

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.

Amount of homework

As they move through the school, we increase the amount of homework that we give the children. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1 are given homework as appropriate to the topics being covered. Reception and Key Stage 1 are also asked to practise their reading and maths learn its. We expect children in Years 3 and 4 to spend approximately 15–30 minutes each week doing homework, in addition to regular reading and maths learn its practice. We expect children in Years 5 and 6 to spend no longer than 1 hour each week doing homework, in addition to regular reading and x tables practice.

Inclusion and homework

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, and we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way. In order to address specific learning needs, some children may have additional or differing work to that provided for the majority of the class. This is arranged with individual parents/carers. We value and celebrate the cultural diversity of our pupils and their families, and we appreciate the enrichment that this brings.

The role of parents/carers

Parents have a vital role to play in their child's education, and homework is an important part of this process. We ask parents/carers 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/carers 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. Homework will not be set which depends upon a parent/carer having specific subject knowledge. Children will be provided with any necessary information required for the homework and will be practising skills introduced in school.

If parents/carers 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, parents/carers should contact the governing body.

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. The governing body may, at any time, request from the head teacher a report on the way homework is organised in our school.

This policy has been written following consultation with parents/carers and will be reviewed in two years, or earlier if necessary.

Signed: H Pemberton

Date: November 2016