



HOMEWORK POLICY

This document clarifies the school’s homework policy, following in-service training.

Four components to Homework in our school:

- Reading
- Maths
- Spelling
- Topic

Wednesday → Monday: the homework cycle

Weekly homework is set on **Wednesdays**, to be completed by **Monday** morning. Reading is a **daily** expectation. Children will also have Maths and Spelling homework to complete each week. Topic-based homework is more flexible, but there is one Special Project each term to complete for each topic.

Children are expected to have completed all their homework by the due date and we expect parents to prioritise their children’s learning to enable this to happen. Appreciating that children lead busy lives (many of us are parents ourselves), we provide a generous timescale each week for homework. We also ask parents to encourage their children to take good care of all homework books and materials.

Parents are asked to provide a quiet, well-lit place for children to complete homework, without distractions (especially siblings, TV, digital entertainment or radio), but in a place where parents can provide encouragement and appropriate support, without ‘doing’ the homework for them.

If your child gets very stuck on a specific homework task, please use your discretion:

- Use questioning to help guide your child towards a solution
- Complete as much as possible in a reasonable time frame – use your judgement
- Drop the teacher a note, explaining that your child struggled and specifying how much time he/she took over it. We can then help.

A Summary

Please read the detail on the following pages – this summary is to go on your fridge.

	Reading	Spelling	Maths	Topic
Early Years	<i>at least 5 mins daily</i>	sounds of the week	counting activities	as advised by staff
Y1-Y2	<i>at least 10 mins daily</i>	differentiated spelling tasks	club sheets <i>at least 5 mins daily</i>	special project + optional tasks
Y3-Y4	<i>at least 15 mins daily</i>	differentiated spelling tasks	club sheets <i>at least 5 mins daily</i>	special project + optional tasks
Y5-Y6	<i>at least 20 mins daily</i>	differentiated spelling tasks	club sheets & weekly maths challenge <i>at least 5 mins daily</i>	special project + optional tasks



READING

Reading is paramount. It is one of the single most important determiners of your child’s future success in school. For that reason, this policy places reading at the centre of homework. The following guidelines provide the minimum amount your child should read at home each day:

Early Years	Years 1-2	Years 3-4	Years 5-6
At least 5 mins daily	At least 10 mins daily	At least 15 mins daily	At least 20 mins daily

Progression:



1. ‘Set homework reading’

What your child’s daily reading experience should be will vary according to need. Please read this:

- If your child is given a levelled book, please support your child in reading it daily. Please focus as much on the understanding of what they read as on the ‘decoding’ of the text.
- There may come a point at which your child is considered a ‘free reader’. He/she is still expected to read daily (as stated above), but chooses the book.
- Please record how your child has read in his/her reading record. This will be checked weekly by an adult in school and acknowledged with a stamp. In Infants, children will be heard to read one-to-one with an adult in school at least once per week. They will also be heard in a guided reading group regularly.
- For free readers, the child him/herself can record which books have been *completed* (i.e. not a daily record) and parents/carers should initial these. Please talk with your free-reading children about their reading; ask them to summarise the plot, to outline the characters or identify their favourite bits. Their reading will be monitored in school as well.

2. Reading for pleasure

- Children should be encouraged to read for pleasure, so we support your child’s personal choices. All children have the chance to take library books home – please look after them! It is very important that your child chooses suitable reading material, so please keep tabs on the age-appropriateness of their chosen reading.
- A broad and varied reading diet is good: picture books, fiction, poems, non-fiction, comics, magazines for children, subtitles of TV programmes – these all support progress in reading.

3. Being read to by an adult

- Please read TO your child; there are few things more enjoyable for a child and their parent/carer than to spend time before lights-out sharing a really good book. We also warmly encourage the use of story CDs *in addition to* parents reading to children.

Clearly 2 and 3 above are optional and rely on parental availability, encouragement and commitment. They have a significant impact on children’s educational chances.



MATHS PRACTICE

Our maths homework requirements focus on acquiring and consolidating key maths knowledge and applying it to solve problems. Maths homework is therefore about practice.

Early Years	<i>at least 5 mins daily</i>	Counting and number recognition: parents will be given specific guidance about these activities
Y1-2		Club Sheets
Y3-4		Club Sheets
Y5-6		Club Sheets & Weekly Maths Challenge

- Y1-6 pupils will apply what they have practised on Mondays in school and this will be peer-marked. Teachers will keep a record of achievement and parents will see their child’s scores weekly on the club sheets completed in school.
- Number bonds (adding/subtracting numbers mentally) and times tables will be differentiated to suit the needs of each child. They will practise the latter using Club Sheets – the emphasis here is on ‘knowing’ the relationships between numbers, not just working through them in order (1x3=, 2x3= - that’s fine for initial learning, but they must be ‘known’ out of sequence eventually). Clubs sheets will be tested on a Monday morning.

It is not our policy to mark Maths practice homework. Teachers’ time is better spent on planning, preparing and assessing the Maths lessons in which the children apply what they have practised.

We warmly encourage parents to look for practical opportunities that will support your child to gain confidence in maths (e.g. cooking, shopping, planning a journey, etc).

SPELLING

Mastering spellings and developing a fluent cursive handwriting style are key skills. We expect children to work on both each week. We expect children to practise using cursive (joined) handwriting skills.

Research confirms that weekly spelling tests have very little impact on children’s long-term progress in spelling, so we replace these with a more varied range of spelling-related tasks in school, including a weekly paired check with a spelling partner, to embed spellings more effectively. The focus is on cumulatively building up an accurate vocabulary *and retaining and applying those words accurately in their day-to-day writing*.

	Spellings
Early Yrs	Sounds of the Week, moving on to School Spelling Scheme books when appropriate. Reception children also have letter/number formation practice to do weekly
Years 1-2	School Spelling Scheme: graduated books: weekly list of 10 spellings – three tasks: 1. Look-Say-Cover-Write-Check practice 2. Anagrams task 3. Puzzle
Years 3-4	
Years 5-6	



TOPIC WORK

- a Topic Bubble will be sent home for children and parents to complete together in the final week of the term preceding the start of a new topic. This indicates children’s prior knowledge and interests. These need to come back by the first day of term in Years 1-6 (within the first 2 weeks of term for Reception and Nursery).
- for Years 1 to 6 a Topic Web is sent home on the first Friday of a new term, setting out an overview of the learning that will take place in the term. This may show the continuation of a major topic.

Special Project: from Y1 to Y6 Compulsory Task for all Children in the Class

For each topic a Special Project task will be set per term – this is compulsory for all and usually open-ended or creative. In addition, children can opt to undertake a range of optional tasks ... or come up with their own topic-related tasks. These provide an opportunity for those children who really get fired up by their topic to do some high-quality work, supported (or not!) by their parents.

Optional Tasks

Acknowledging that children will have different amounts of time and receive different degrees of parental support, we suggest a range of optional tasks for children to undertake (perhaps one per week), in order to enrich their learning and develop good homework skills. It is our expectation that parents will require their children to do more of these as they progress through the school, to prepare them for secondary school.

Benefits:

- increases children’s engagement with their topic – helps them get into it
- provides opportunities for parents and children to learn together
- develops good homework habits, which will be essential in secondary school

The sorts of tasks:

Carry out research	Draw a picture	Draw a map
Write an interview with ...	Write a diary entry as ...	Write a poem about ...
Build a ...	Design a ...	Dress up as ...
Cook a recipe	Make a model of ...	Write a quiz about ...
Invent a board game about ...		

(We will always leave blank spaces for your child to come up with their own activities or tasks.)

Feedback and Rewards for Good Homework: STAMPS for topic homework (1, 2 or 3 stars awarded in recognition)