

Homework Guidelines Draft

Deerpark Primary School

Homework can be an effective means of reinforcing the learning that takes place in the classroom. It is also a valuable means of sharing the children's learning experiences with parents/carers at home.

Our aim is that homework should consist of relevant, worthwhile and suitably challenging activities and that each party; teacher, child and parent/carer understands their role to ensure learning experiences are maximised. It is our intention; however, that homework should not be over burdensome for children, parents or staff. Home learning should reflect the learning that is taking place in the classroom, promote independent learning and provide opportunities for learners to draw on the skills and knowledge of those at home.

Aims:

- To share learning with parents and carers at home
- To involve parents and carers in their children's learning
- To encourage confidence and independent learning
- To promote responsible attitudes
- To challenge and extend children's learning
- To consolidate and practise knowledge and skills

Challenge

Challenge should be provided for all children in their learning, both in school and as part of their homework, and allow opportunities for learners to develop learned skills within a range of engaging activities. The use of homework grids provides children and their families an element of choice, allows for ownership of learning and enables some learners an opportunity to stretch themselves. (See appendix 1)

Activities contained within homework grids will often require materials and resources other than homework jotters. The school will provide help when help is required.

Sumdog- www.sumdog.com

Some classes use Sumdog to support learning in some areas of the curriculum. Each child is given a username and password and can access activities via the Internet from home. Class teachers may set tasks using the website to be completed at home as part of weekly homework

Learners may also be required to use the following websites:

- www.classdojo.com (Amendments to homework can be communicated through the messaging option. Queries regarding homework can also be answered using messaging)
- www.spellingcity.com (Offers a range of spelling games to support learning)
- www.woodlandsjunior.com (Offers a range of interactive games from across the curriculum)
- www.topmarks.co.uk (Offers a range of interactive games from across the curriculum)
- www.studyadder.com (Offers a wide range of online Literacy and Numeracy activities)

Learning Teaching Scotland (LTS) helpfully list questions to help judge level of challenge within homework-

Will pupils:

- Be clear about the purpose of the activity
- Have an audience for their work
- Think it is worthwhile
- Be able to discuss it with other pupils, family or friends
- Get recognition and feedback from the teacher

In addition will pupils:

- Be aware of how their learning links across the curriculum
- Be able to transfer learned skills into other areas of their daily life

Will the homework:

- Deepen their understanding of the subject

- Feed into and enhance classroom learning
- Consolidate skills and/or develop new skills
- Aid learners in experiencing a sense of satisfaction and achievement

Core Homework

All children should get suitably challenging stage appropriate core homework each week. Core homework should consist of Reading, Spelling and Numeracy. Time durations for stages are not specified and take into account feedback collected from learners, parents/carers, and teachers' professional judgement of learners' abilities and balance. Homework intentions for the year ahead should be outlined at the beginning of each session, during 'Meet the Teacher' afternoon.

Thematic Homework

In addition to core homework, activities relating to the children's wider learning will also be set. Thematic homework will usually relate to a current project or class topic.

Homework Challenges

Homework challenges should be an opportunity for children to draw on learned skills from across the curriculum and utilise them within a time contained learning activity. Learners will be given a platform to take ownership of their learning, collaborate with parents/carers, be creative, research, have fun and showcase learning. It is the schools intention that homework challenges are outlined with a view to appropriate timescales and those families with more than one child does not have more than one homework challenge at any given time. Each stage will set a minimum of two homework challenges per year and will allow a three-week timescale to complete the agreed task. Only core Literacy and Numeracy homework will be issued alongside homework challenges to ensure homework commitments are suitably manageable.

Learning Styles

Children learn in a variety of different ways and environments, and this should be taken into consideration when outlining homework criteria. The principle of personalisation and choice underpins our schools use of homework grids. Homework grids should ensure activities are varied, engaging and fun and may include some of the following:

- Web Search
- Interactive Games
- Reading Detective Activities

- **Mind Mapping**
- **Creative Spelling Activities**
- **Big Maths Beat That**
- **Making a model**
- **Designing a poster**
- **Learning a poem/song**
- **Preparing a presentation**
- **Creating a game or a quiz**
- **Local Surveys**
- **Visiting a location with a family member**

Parents'/Carers Role

Parents and carers can have an influential role in facilitating a supportive and positive environment so as to maximise homework experiences. Through taking an active interest in learning, sharing knowledge and experience and praising achievement, parents and carers can support success. Parents and carers can help by:

- **Helping children to plan their weekly homework schedule**
- **Helping children plan lengthy tasks**
- **Ensuring children work in an appropriate environment**
- **Taking an active interest in work brought home (but not doing it for them)**
- **Supporting tasks e.g. use of library, visits, suggesting sources of information and sharing knowledge and experience**
- **Providing feedback- encourage children to correct errors- but not excessive rewriting**
- **Encouraging your child to achieve their tasks**
- **Signing homework to say that they have seen the completed work**
- **Parents/carers should not mark homework, but be aware of their child's level of understanding so that issues can be communicated to the class teacher where necessary**

Child's Role

Children have the responsibility to:

- Do their best work
- Complete and return their work in the allocated timescale
- Discuss any difficulties with their teacher as soon as possible
- Ensure that parents/carers are aware of homework criteria
- Ask for support from parents/carers and teachers where required
- Ask parents/carers to sign/comment on their homework

Teacher's Role

- To allocate appropriately challenging homework
- To ensure that success criteria is fully explained and AifL strategies used to gauge children's understanding
- To consider practical barriers to completing homework
- To provide feedback to pupils
- Allow children to display/showcase their work
- To recognise effort (See appendix 2)

Whole School Role

- There should be a consistent approach across the school to core homework and expectations
- To provide additional support where required (Homework club)
- To address practical barriers to completing homework (Internet etc.)
- To allow appropriate timescale for activities
- To ensure homework challenges do not clash with siblings challenges
- To ensure guidelines reflect school values
- To ensure that quality assurance is achieved through moderation
- Annual whole school approach to guideline reflection

Consultation process

Learners' views were gathered through questionnaires and stage group discussion. Some classes trialled different types of homework and gauged popularity. Teaching staff have shared their views and advice by completing a questionnaire and have had the opportunity to join a homework focus group. Parents have had the opportunity to express opinion by completing a focused questionnaire. Areas of agreement suggest that:

Homework Should

- Be enjoyable for learners
- Reinforce work in class
- Not be burdensome
- Be challenging
- Offer opportunities for personalisation and choice
- Allow opportunities to be creative
- Be set weekly, allowing children to manage their time
- Include opportunities for research

Appendix (1)

Homework Grid Example

Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4
Things to be practised every day: Spelling words, 4 times table, Scots poem and song			
<p>1. <u>Spelling:</u></p> <p>Choose one of the activities on the spelling sheet.</p>	<p>1. <u>Reading:</u></p> <p>Choose a Home Reader Book. Become a Reading Detective! Read to a friend or member of your family. Can you take on the role of 'Mind Mapper'? Include Characters, Key points of the story and Setting.</p>	<p>1. <u>Topic:</u></p> <p>If you require something to sell at Friday's selling afternoon can you work with someone at home to make it? I.e. Cakes. Perhaps you will need to do something in return. (Chores etc)</p>	<p>1. <u>Maths:</u></p> <p>Collect and complete the Money Problem Solving sheet. Record your answers in your homework jotter.</p>
<p>2. <u>Spelling:</u></p> <p>Log onto www.spellingcity.com and enter your spelling words. Choose a game to play.</p>	<p>2. <u>Reading:</u></p> <p>Choose a Home Reader Book. Become a Reading Detective! Read to a friend or member of your family. Can you take on the role of 'Question Master'? Create at least 5 questions based on the part of the story you have read. Challenge someone at home to answer them.</p>	<p>2 <u>News:</u></p> <p>Think of the different ways we hear about the things that happen in the world, newspapers, radio, television, and internet. Write a short paragraph about a news story, include where you found out about it.</p>	<p>2. <u>Maths:</u></p> <p>Complete Big Maths 'Beat That' worksheet. Have a friend or family member time you. You have 100 secs.</p>

Appendix (2)

How We Recognise Effort

- **Class Dojo points**
- **Golden/Silver time**
- **Certificates**
- **Stickers**
- **Monthly reward (e.g. Movie)**
- **Homework Pass**
- **Buddy Time**
- **Showcase Learning (Assemblies etc)**
- **Displays**
- **Star Homework Presentations**