

COMBE PAFFORD SCHOOL

Homework Policy

Rationale

It is widely accepted by educationalists that homework can make an important contribution to children's progress at school. By supporting in-class activities, homework also offers pupils a constructive alternative to TV, computer games etc.

However, it must be developed as an integral part of the whole learning process and not as an optional extra. As such it is vital that the right type and amount of homework for pupils with special educational needs is given. Appropriate homework should not demand too much or too little of both our pupils and their parents.

There will be a need for close co-ordination between class teachers, classroom assistants and parents which should strengthen home - school contact.

Guidelines

1. What is homework?

Homework refers to any work or activities which pupils are asked to do outside lesson time.

BUT -

- it ought to be well integrated into the lesson during which it is given.
- it should be additional to the lesson and not simply a matter of completing unfinished tasks from the lesson - ALTHOUGH THAT MAY BE A REQUIREMENT AS WELL

2. The purpose of homework

- to consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- to extend the learning of reading
- to ensure that the needs of individual pupils are fully understood and met
- to encourage improvement in time management and organisational skills amongst pupils
- to develop progression towards independence and personal responsibility
- to allow parents a greater insight into their child's development
- to aid effective partnership between school and parents or carers
- to provide opportunities for parents and pupils to work together

3 The type and amount of homework

When setting homework teachers should note the following:

- a) that the precise amount of time spent on homework is much less important than the quality of the tasks set and the way they support in-class learning
- b) 'finishing off' tasks from the classroom could form part of a pupil's homework but must not be the sole regular weekly practice
- c) homework should have a clear focus and a time-guideline
- d) pupils must have work at which they can succeed
- e) homework should show variation - and not be purely written assignments
- f) be manageable for themselves

The main focus of homework should be on literacy and numeracy but this should not deter other subject teachers from setting tasks when appropriate.

The following structure includes recommended time allocation for homework tasks:

- in Key Stage 2/3 reading as appropriate of a minimum 2 or 3 times per week - tasks of 10/15 minutes. In Key Stage 3 the more able readers need not be set specific tasks.
- in Key Stage 4 reading tasks as Key Stage 3 for those on the reading register, and those needing additional help. For the more able, tasks could take the form of comprehension exercises or reading for preparation/research. (1 per week - 30/40 minutes)
- other English homework following up classwork (all Key Stages) - (30/40 minutes per week)
- spelling or word tests - 10-15 new words per week (KS2 and KS3 as appropriate - approx. 30 minutes learning per week)
- Maths homework per week of 30/40 minutes duration
- homework may be set for other subjects when deemed appropriate by the teacher, who should be aware of the need to avoid overload.

4 Planning, managing and marking homework

- The class teacher, classroom assistant and subject specialists are responsible for ensuring that the demands of homework are manageable for pupils and parents on a daily basis.
- Homework must be set regularly i.e. English and Maths to be given and returned on set days of the week: tests to be administered at set times etc. This familiar routine is helpful for all involved.
- All homework should be recorded in the pupil's Homework diary when it is given
- Sufficient time must be allowed for pupils to complete homework to an agreed and acceptable standard.
- There must be an expectation that all pupils complete homework. Loss of break or lunchtimes could be used as a sanction during which the outstanding work is done.
- Teachers must mark homework promptly and give informative feedback on what has been done. This must be clear to both pupil and supporting parent/carer.
- Similarly, in the case of reading homework set by classroom assistants.
- Teachers must take into account any feedback from supporting adults at home and respond appropriately.
- Regular contact with parents can be made through the use of the homework diary in which all parties can record comments. **IT IS IMPORTANT THAT ALL COMMENTS ARE READ AND ACTED UPON IF DEEMED NECESSARY.**
- Teachers and classroom assistants must ensure that pupils are completing homework and returning it on or before an agreed 'deadline'. All staff need to be mindful that some pupils will live in an environment that makes homework difficult to complete
- Teachers/classroom assistants should praise and reward homework achievements liberally and strive to maintain pupil motivation.

5 The role of parents and carers in supporting pupils

Parents and other supporting adults will play a vital role in the successful implementation of this policy. It is hoped that there will be closer partnerships between school and home.

Many parents and carers will welcome regular information and guidance on ways in which they can best support homework. Therefore, at the beginning of each school year (or upon entry of new pupils mid-year) the parents/carers must be informed of our homework policy and given an opportunity to comment.

They should also receive clear guidelines as to how they can effectively encourage and support the completion of good homework such as:

- making it clear to their son/daughter that they value homework as an aid to learning
- providing a peaceful, suitable place for homework to be done
- encouraging pupils to do homework before they go out or watch evening television
- finding regular time to listen to reading and asking questions about the text
- checking written homework - encouraging neatness and accuracy but not to be too critical
- becoming actively involved if they so wish but not by simply giving the answers or dictating sentences.

The 'Homework Diary' will be the means through which parents/carers will be able to monitor all aspects of their son/daughter's homework. There will also be ample space for them to return any comments and they should be encouraged to do so frequently.

6 Monitoring and evaluating the policy

- it is the responsibility of the curriculum deputy to check a sample of homework diaries and tasks periodically (once a term) to maintain efficiency and effectiveness of the homework policy
- feedback will be provided by him/her on the quality of homework set
- the policy will be reviewed each September and could include parental involvement via relevant comments made throughout the previous year.

September 1998

Reviewed: November 1998/June 2000/Feb 2003/Feb 2004/January 2005

Date for Review: Feb 2007