

# Fallings Park Primary School Policy and Guidelines for Homework

**Reviewed and updated in March 2012**

## **Introduction:**

Homework is anything that 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 children's learning as well as self-initiated study from pupils.

## **Rationale for Homework:**

Homework is an important part of a child's education and can add much to a child's development. Children benefit greatly from the mutual support of parents and teachers in encouraging them to learn both at home and at school. One of the aims for our school is for children to develop as independent learners and we believe that 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 but 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 wide range of out-of-school clubs and organisations that play an important part in the lives of many children. We are aware that children spend more time at home than at school, and we believe they develop their skills, interests and talents to the full only when parents encourage them to make maximum use of the experiences and opportunities that are available outside of school.

## **Aims:**

The aims of homework are:

- to enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development;
- to promote self-discipline and help pupils' develop the skills of an independent learner;
- to promote a partnership and understanding between home and school in supporting each child's learning;
- to provide educational experiences not possible in school;
- to consolidate and reinforce learning done in school and to allow children to practise skills taught in lessons;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future.

To achieve our aims we will:

- set homework tasks to suit the needs of pupils;
- set work that is enjoyable and worthwhile;
- promote the notion that homework is to be valued and have high expectations from the children;
- ensure that parents/carers understand the nature of the homework and how they can support their children in carrying out homework tasks;
- provide opportunities for parents to acquire the knowledge they need to support their children in completing homework tasks.

### **The Role of Parents:**

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 they feel necessary and provide them with the sort of environment that allows children to do their best.

Parents can support their child by:

- providing an appropriate working space at home;
- providing the appropriate tools for completion of a task;
- encouraging their child to visit the library regularly;
- reading to/with their child;
- listening to their child read and discussing their books;
- talking about the work that their child is doing.

We ask parents to check their child's reading diary and to sign it as requested and check the homework folders to ensure completion of given tasks.

If parents have any problems or questions about homework, they should, in the first instance, contact their child's class teacher. If their questions are of a more general nature, they should contact the headteacher. 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.

### **The Role of Pupils:**

It is the pupil's responsibilities that weekly homework tasks are completed to the best of their ability. There is a link between homework that is completed regularly and pupil's attainment.

- Pupils should ensure that if absent on a Friday, homework is collected when they return to school and completed within an appropriate time scale.
- Problems with homework tasks should be discussed with the relevant teacher at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Pupils should take as much pride in the completion of homework tasks as they do their class work.
- Foundation stage pupils should complete given tasks in the time scale given by their teachers.

### **Monitoring and Review:**

It is the responsibility of our governing body to agree and then monitor the school homework policy. The curriculum/monitoring committee of the governing body does this.

### **Inclusion**

In school we provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. Through the planning of the homework, we meet the needs of individuals and groups of pupils. Effective learning opportunities are provided that can be modified, if necessary, to provide all pupils with relevant and appropriately challenging work at each Key Stage. When setting homework to pupils who are named on the register of special needs, we refer to the Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Where children are high achievers we set homework tasks which extend their learning further.

The following 3 principles ensure an inclusive curriculum:

1. setting suitable learning challenges
2. responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
3. overcoming potential barriers to learning and making amends for individuals and groups of pupils.

Careful planning of homework tasks, takes account of pupils with disabilities enabling them to participate as fully and effectively as possible.

# **Guidelines to setting Homework**

## **Types of Homework:**

We set a variety of homework activities based on:

- reading and extending sight vocabulary
- phonics
- practising strategies to improve spelling
- practising reading comprehension skills
- developing word and sentence level skills e.g. punctuation
- handling writing tools and practising letter formation
- developing counting skills
- learning multiplication tables
- practising written calculation methods
- research (including use of the library/internet)
- gathering information and resources to help develop work in school

We set and mark literacy and maths homework routinely on a Friday each week with the pupils, and we expect the children to consolidate and reinforce learning in school through practice at home.

Pupils are supplied with A4 folders and books for maths and literacy in order to store homework neatly.

We also set homework as a means of helping the children to revise for examinations as well as to ensure that prior learning has been understood.

## **Feedback on Homework:**

Parents should give immediate feedback to their children, when they have actively involved themselves in their child's homework. They will be encouraged to praise their children for work well done, as a sign that they value their children's work.

Feedback from teachers will be done through written comments, testing tasks given for homework, publicising the achievements of individual children, in class or assemblies.

Pupils will share the marking of the homework with their peers and will share, with their parents their achievements and any comments from the teacher.

## **Monitoring of Homework**

A weekly record of participation in homework is kept by teachers and discussed at parents' evenings.

Our Home School/Attendance Officer (Ms O'Connor) will follow up the take up of homework by children in order that parents are supported and aware of the children's responsibilities.

### **Procedures for Supporting Completion of Homework.**

- Homework is collected and set on a Friday.
- Homework may not be on the last day of term.
- Where children are absent on a Friday, homework is placed in pupil tray.
- Teachers complete a weekly register each Friday.
- Outcomes of the register are followed up by B O'Connor.

### **Code for Register**

Y = Homework handed in

N = Homework not handed in

A = Pupil absent or valid reason for not completing homework

Parents of pupils who fail to complete homework on a regular basis will be informed by Ms O'Connor and advised to discuss the issue with the relevant teachers.

Parents are invited to discuss their child's homework with the class teacher either informally after school or during parents' evenings.