



# MARYLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL HOMEWORK POLICY

## 1 Introduction

1.1. Homework encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents to support children's learning. For example, a parent who spends time reading a story to their child before bedtime is helping with homework.

## 2 Rationale for homework

2.1 The government made clear its commitment to homework in the 1997 White Paper, "Excellence in Schools", where homework was seen as "an essential part of good education". We recognise that the time and resources available limit the educational experience that any school by itself can provide; children benefit greatly therefore from the mutual support of parents and teachers in encouraging them to learn both at home and at school. One of the aims of our school is for children to develop as independent learners. We believe that homework is one of the main ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning.

## 3 Aims and objectives

- 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 a partnership 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 learning done in school and to allow children to practice skills taught in lessons;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future;
- to help the children achieve their set literacy and numeracy targets.

## 4 Types of homework

4.1 We set a variety of homework activities. We encourage pupils to read by giving them books to take home to read with their parents. We also ask children to learn spellings. *Mathletics* homework is set weekly, as is number bonds and times tables homework from *MENTAL MATHS 5 a day*. Sometimes we ask children to talk about or research a topic at home prior to studying it in school. Sometimes we ask children to find and collect items that we then use in lessons, and occasionally we ask children to take home work that they have started in school when we believe that they would 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 the school and local library and the internet and other sources. We give children comprehension and genre writing tasks. We also encourage pupils to word process, review and improve extended writing tasks at home that have been started in class.

4.2 In the junior years, we expect the children to consolidate and reinforce learning done in school through practice at home. We also set homework as a means for helping the children to revise for tests as well as to ensure that prior learning has been understood.

4.4 Parents are provided with a Read Write Inc grapheme chart to help reinforce the work done in the classroom. They are also reminded periodically of the RWI website where the sounds can be heard.

4.5 Every term a homework research project is set for pupils in Years 1-6 that parents are encouraged to get involved in. Parental meetings are held to provide guidance and discuss expectations.

## **5 Amount of homework**

5.1 We increase the amount of homework that we give the children as they move through the school. We expect infant children to spend approximately one hour a week doing homework, although this may well include reading with a parent. We expect children in year 3 and 4 to spend approximately 15 – 20 minutes per night on homework including reading and children in year 5 and 6 to spend approximately 30 minutes per night. This is in line with the DfE guidelines that were issued in 1998. In Foundation Stage parents should share a book with their child and practise their sounds, counting and number bonds to 10 every evening from *Mental Maths 5 a day*..

## **6 Pupils with special education needs**

6.1 We set homework for all children as a normal part of the school life. We ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to the ability of the child. If a child has special needs, we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way.

## **7 The role of parents**

7.1 Parents have a vital role to play in their child's education, and homework is an important part of this process. We provide every child with a homework diary that parents are required to sign. Teachers plan homework weekly on a proforma that is pasted into the homework diary. We ask parents to encourage their child to complete the homework tasks that are set and provide them with suitable equipment. 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 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. If parents do not have internet access at home, it is possible to book a slot at the local library for this purpose.

7.2 If parents have any problems or 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 Headteacher. Finally, if they wish to make a complaint about the school homework policy or the way it is implemented, parents should go through the school's complaints procedure.

## **8 The role of the school**

8.1 Teachers do not mark homework. Teacher assistants monitor that it is done. Parents are contacted if homework is not regularly brought into school. If collective difficulty is noticed in the monitoring process, teachers address it with the whole class.

8.2 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 at their first meeting of the year.