



Homework Policy

September 2018

Approved by the Governing Body Strategy Group 13/09/18

This Policy is due for renewal in Term 1
2020–21

HOMEWORK POLICY

OF

GODINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

The word parent in this policy refers to parents and carers.

SECTION ONE – PURPOSE OF HOMEWORK

- developing an effective partnership between the school and parents and other carers in pursuing the aims of the school.
- consolidating and reinforcing skills and understanding, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- utilising resources for learning, of all kinds, at home
- extended school learning, for example, through additional reading
- encouraging pupils as they get older to develop confidence and self-discipline needed to study on their own, and preparing them for the requirements of the Secondary school.

SECTION TWO – APPROACH TO SETTING HOMEWORK

Homework builds on work done in the classroom. It enables the class teacher and the parent to confirm that the child has an understanding of a subject and helps to install and develop a sense of discipline about work at home. If a teacher sets homework there is an expectation that this will be completed by the set date. All children are encouraged to complete the homework set and this is monitored by the class teachers. Homework completion is also reported to parents on each school reports through an 'effort' grade. Although children will be encouraged to complete homework, staff are not expected to keep children in at break or lunch if it is not completed. Ongoing failure to participate in homework activities would be shared with parents and discussed with the child with a view to an improvement in engagement.

Most homework will focus on – English and mathematics. Occasionally other subjects, such as history, geography, science, ICT and RE may also be set as topic homework. Homework should be provided on a consistent basis, with sufficient time allowed for the completion of the task. Class teachers will ensure that the task is appropriate to the ability of the child. Homework is often differentiated 2 or 3 ways to enable access for all children. Children will be given clear instructions about the activity to be undertaken. The amount of time taken on a piece of homework will vary according to the ability of the child. All children have a homework book in which to complete the majority of homework tasks set. Sometimes homework maybe of a practical nature and not recorded. Work completed in the homework books will be marked by the class teachers but developmental comments are not required. If it is clear that a child needs further support having marked

the homework, this will be followed up in class by the class teacher or Teaching Assistant.

In addition to weekly homework, we also set an 'optional' piece of Creative Homework at each half-term holiday. This is a piece of homework based on a whole school theme. Children can choose what to create or write about in relation to the theme. Creative homework is then returned to school and a class assembly takes place to enable each child to talk about their homework. Creative homework winners are selected and the winners have a tea party with the Headteacher to share their work. Records of Creative homework completion are kept and an end of year treat is provided for children who complete at least 2 pieces of Creative homework.

The school has an annual subscription to 'MyMaths' – an online portal for setting and completing maths homework. All children have a unique log on to enable them to access the homework tasks the class teachers set. In addition to the homework tasks set, children can also log-on and play some of the online games. MyMaths does require access to either a PC or tablet with Internet access. To enable access for all, a MyMaths homework club runs during a lunchtime on a weekly basis.

In addition to the MyMaths lunchtime club, a weekly after school homework club is held during terms 2-5 to enable the children to complete their homework at school. This club is open for Yrs 4-6 and limited to 30 places.

SECTION THREE – DFE RECOMMENDED TIME ALLOCATION FOR HOMEWORK

Years 1 and 2

1 hour/week (English, including reading, Mathematics or cross-curricular work)

Years 3 and 4

1.5 hours/week (English, including reading and Mathematics as for Years 1 and 2 with occasional assignments in other subjects)

Years 5 and 6

30 minutes/day (regular weekly schedule with continued emphasis on English and Mathematics, but also ranging widely over the curriculum). Reading continues to form part of homework.

SECTION FOUR – HOMEWORK SET BY EACH YEAR GROUP

Detailed below is an indication of the homework that each year group is expected to do. Some of this homework is not set each week, e.g; daily reading or practising spellings and times tables. However, this part of homework expectation is outlined at the start of every year in the Year Group Welcome Letters which can also be found on the school website.

Year R

Daily reading; repeating nursery rhymes, counting rhymes, counting, reinforcing letter sounds, reading key words, sharing library books.

Year 1

Daily reading and regular practice of phonics and number bonds. From term 2, one piece of either English, maths or topic related homework will be set.

Year 2

Daily reading and regular practice of spellings and number bonds. A weekly English, maths or topic related homework will also be set.

Years 3 & 4

Daily reading. Weekly times tables and spellings to learn. A weekly English, maths or topic related homework will also be set.

In terms 5 & 6, Yr 4 homework will increase to be in line with Yr 5 to help prepare them for the move into year 5.

Years 5 & 6

Reading daily. Weekly times tables and spellings to learn. Weekly maths homework is set using MyMaths as well as an English based activity once a fortnight, occasionally supplemented by a science or topic activity.

There will be an expectation that children in year 5 and 6 will spend longer on homework activities in preparation for secondary school. This should not exceed 50 minutes total per evening and would include reading for enjoyment.

Because of the depth of work covered in these year groups, children may on occasions, be expected to complete a piece of extended writing or other work on a given subject.

There may be times when some children will be asked to complete work begun in class, to ensure that they maintain optimum progress. Any child not completing work to the expectation of the teacher may be asked to finish their work at home. Time spent on this should not exceed 30 minutes.

If children do not understand their homework, then they should talk to the class teacher at the earliest opportunity. All homework tasks are explained to the children in class.

Spelling activities may be built into homework activities for all year groups. Children in Years 3–6 are also given spellings lists to take home and learn. The children are expected to practise these on a regular basis and be ready to be tested on them. The regularity of the tests will be outlined by each class teacher.

SECTION FOUR – ROLE OF PARENTS IN SUPPORTING HOMEWORK

Every class teacher will give a written synopsis to parents within a few weeks of the start of the academic year, to explain the work to be covered, what is expected from the children and the approach to homework as part of the year group welcome letter. This is an important part of the communication process, giving parents the opportunity to ask questions about any aspect of class activity. A guide to supporting parents is attached as Appendix A and can also be found on the school website.

Teachers may feel this is an appropriate opportunity to offer advice or hints on how parents can help their child to learn spellings and tables.

The parent is expected to support and encourage the child by giving time and a home environment in which homework can be done. The class teacher will, as far as possible, ensure that the child is completely clear on what they are expected to do at home so that upper school children, in particular, are able to communicate this to the parent. It is hoped that this will encourage the children to develop a sense of responsibility. Sometimes the homework will include with it simple instructions for how it should be completed.

Children benefit enormously from being able to discuss what they have done with their parents. This is not to suggest that the parent should spend time altering or correcting the child's work but rather discuss it and suggest how it might be done differently or improved. Constructive comments enable the child to develop a better understanding of the work and reinforce what is taught in school. Above all other subjects, reading is a crucial aspect of school work and needs to be encouraged at all times. A child's written skills reflect the attitude of reading. A child who reads widely and with enthusiasm is often able to translate this into written work. It is not possible for an adult to hear a child read at school every day. It is most important, therefore, for a parent to try to hear their child read or discuss their reading with them as often as possible. Younger children need to be heard on a regular daily basis, older children may however be expected to read independently and silently to themselves.

It is of great benefit to children of all ages to discuss issues of all kinds with their parents.

It is hoped that parents will support the school in encouraging their children to develop a responsible attitude to their homework whilst seeing the importance of not making home an extension of school. The environment should be more relaxed and, provided the child has been concentrating on the work in hand, a time limit imposed. We should ensure that we allow them time to play and be children.

This policy is made available to parents on the school website.

SECTION FIVE – CHILDREN IN CARE

As for all our pupils, Godinton Primary School is committed to helping every Child in Care (CIC) to achieve the highest standards they can. To this end staff will ensure that in delivering the curriculum they set suitable learning challenges of CiC, respond to the diverse learning needs of CIC, and help to overcome the potential barriers to learning and assessment for CIC. The teacher with responsibility for CIC will support with this.

SECTION SIX – MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring homework. They are also responsible for supporting colleagues in setting homework, for being informed about current developments, and for providing a strategic lead and direction throughout the school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with appendix A ‘Homework – a guide for Parents.’

SECTION SEVEN – EQUALITY STATEMENT (Refer also to specific policies for equal opportunities and racial equality)

At Godinton Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all members of our school community irrespective of race, gender, disability, belief, sexual orientation, age or socio-economic background. We are determined to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and ability to participate fully in school life.

We tackle discrimination through the positive promotion of equality by challenging stereotypes and by creating an environment that champions respect for all. At Godinton Primary School, we believe that diversity is a strength that should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit us.

All school policies have an explicit aim of promoting equality and will be reviewed in terms of their contribution and effectiveness in achieving this aim.

Appendix A

Homework – A guide for parents

What is the purpose of homework?

Homework will always be a contentious issue; with some people believing that as a school we give too much homework and others thinking that we don't give enough. Our aim is always to find and provide a balance. The purpose of homework as defined in our policy is as follows:

- developing an effective partnership between the school and parents and other carers in pursuing the aims of the school.
- consolidating and reinforcing skills and understanding, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- utilising resources for learning, of all kinds, at home
- extended school learning, for example, through additional reading
- encouraging pupils as they get older to develop confidence and self-discipline needed to study on their own, and preparing them for the requirements of the Secondary school.

Government guidelines on homework give a broad indication of the type of activities and how much time pupils of different ages might reasonably be expected to spend on homework.

For children at primary schools the guidelines are:

Years 1 and 2	1 hour per week
Years 3 and 4	1.5 hours per week
Years 5 and 6	30 minutes per day

For pupils at secondary school the guidelines are:

Years 7 and 8	45–90 minutes per day
Year 9	1–2 hours per day
Years 10 and 11	1.5 – 2.5 hours per day

The above will include 10 to 20 minutes of reading and, where “per day” is stated this will sometimes be aggregated over more than one day. In other words, a task may be set that takes 50 minutes that may constitute 3 or 4 days worth of homework after reading is taken into account.

However, the guidelines emphasise that it is more important that homework helps your child to learn than whether it takes a certain amount of time. The guidelines encourage schools to plan homework carefully alongside the work children do at school, and to make

sure that all activities are appropriate for individual children. As a result some tasks may be differentiated for pupils of different abilities.

Homework will always be carefully explained to the children and will link to skills and activities which the children have been working on in class. Often written instructions will also be provided to assist. Remembering tasks is an important skill for children to develop and they are obviously supported with this. If your child does forget what they have to do they might find it useful to phone a friend or should talk to their teacher as soon as possible. Each year group has a regular timetable for setting homework.



How much homework?

Children should not be expected to spend significantly longer on them than the guide times set out above.

Activities may not take as long as the guide times: that does not matter at all as long as they are useful.

At Godinton we organise homework carefully so that children are not expected to do too much on any one day.

What sort of activities should children be doing?

All homework activities should be related to work children are doing at school.

However, homework should not always be written work. For young children it will largely be:

- reading with parents or carers
- informal games to practice mathematical skills
- phonics activities

For older children, including children at secondary school, homework may include:

- reading
- preparing a presentation to the class
- finding out information
- making something
- trying out a simple scientific experiment
- cooking
- a game to play
- Year 6 children will also have some revision tasks set as homework in preparation for the Key Stage Two SATs.



As children get older, particularly in Year 6, homework will be structured to help support the transition to Secondary School with emphasis placed on independent study.

Homework for all children will generally follow a set pattern each week. For younger children this means that they are able to get into a routine with homework and will soon get used to when certain pieces of work

will be due in. For children in Years 5 and 6 more independent project work encourages children to develop the skill of managing their time more effectively over a longer period of time.

Should parents help with homework?

Our school is very keen for parents to support and help children with their homework, but there may be times when we want to see what your children can do on their own. It is also important, particularly as they get older, for your children to become increasingly independent in their learning.

However, schools generally take the view that children are likely to get more out of an activity if parents get involved – as long as they do not take over too much.

If you are unsure about what your role should be, discuss it with your child's teacher.

They will be pleased that you are interested and will want to help you get the balance right.

Feedback on your child's homework

Schools are expected to make sure that children are given feedback on their homework. It should be given in a way that lets your child know

- how well they have done
- how they could do better

This may not always be through written comments from the teacher.

- sometimes, work will be discussed in lessons
- other times, teachers may give written comments on just one or two aspects of a piece of work
- Where appropriate, a class teacher or teaching assistant may work through an aspect of the homework in class with your child.

Homework will usually be completed in the children's homework book or on the MyMaths website.

Children with special needs

The Government's guidelines include broad recommendations on homework for children with special needs. Schools are expected to consider carefully the needs of individual children and think about how they can best work with parents and carers to support their learning, including their personal and social development.

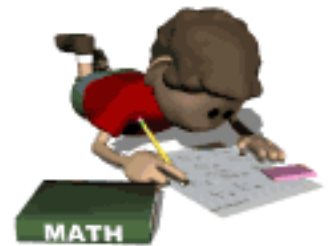
Teachers are asked to be careful to ensure that children with special needs in mainstream schools are given good quality homework tasks – rather than just finishing off class work.

They also work with school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (the SENCO) to make sure that the level is right

Ten things you can do to help your child learn outside (and at) school

1. Give your child confidence through lots of praise and encouragement.
 - As a parent, you have tremendous power to strengthen your child's confidence – and confidence is vital to learning.
 - Specific praise focusing on a particular aspect of their work ("I like the way you have...") is more effective than bland, blanket praise.

- Some people argue that to really do well, children – perhaps all of us – need ten-times as much praise as criticism!
2. Read to, and with, your child as much as possible.
 - The **G**overnment is encouraging parents and carers to read to children, hear them read, or encourage them to read to themselves, for at least 20 minutes a day. It is particularly useful for children to see male role models reading – this might be reading the sports pages of a newspaper with dad or granddad or sharing a non-fiction book together.
 3. Encourage children to observe and talk about their surroundings.
 - Even young children can be helped to read notices and signs, for example, and understand what they mean.
 4. Make use of your local library.
 - Look out for special events and services for children.
 5. Visit museums and places you think your child might find interesting.
 - Children now have free admission to major national museums and art galleries.
 6. If your children like watching television, watch it with them sometimes and encourage them to talk about what they have seen. They will get more out of the experience.
 7. Try to set time aside to do "homework" activities with young children. We don't mind if other members of the family join in too!
 8. Wherever possible, try to provide a reasonably quiet place for children to do homework (or help them to get to other places where homework can be done).
 9. Encourage your child to discuss homework with you, including feedback from teachers. Practice helping without taking over!
 10. Try to help your child to see the enjoyable aspects of homework!



Details of the reading record books which children in Yrs R-3 are given can be found in the Year group welcome letters.