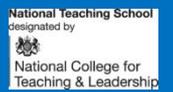


Homework Policy

Policy Updated: October 2019

Future Review: October 2021



Nurture ~ Believe ~ Discover ~ Achieve

OUR CHRISTIAN VISION

Our vision for Woodstock CE Primary School reflects a passionate commitment to learning and recognition of the uniqueness of individual learners. Guided by our Christian values, it is driven by our desire to offer the best possible education for our pupils in partnership with parents, the Church and the local community.

Woodstock CE Primary School will be a centre for learning where adults and children:

- ✓ **Nurture** and prioritise wellbeing and development.
- ✓ **Believe** in themselves and in each other.
- ✓ **Discover** their own strengths and become successful lifelong learners.
- ✓ **Achieve** more than they ever thought possible.

OUR CHRISTIAN ETHOS

Recognising our historic foundation, we will preserve and develop our religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Churches at parish and diocesan level.

Woodstock CE Primary School strives to be an inclusive community where children grow, learn and achieve together. Within a nurturing, supportive and safe environment, mental health and wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do and recognised as the responsibility of all. Children's natural curiosity is fostered through a creative curriculum that excites and challenges, and enables them to be successful learners. Supported by a culture of equality and aspiration we aim to remove disadvantage so that every child can thrive.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. We encourage an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promote Christian values through the experience we offer to all our pupils.

"For I know the plans I have for you", declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29, v11



HOMEWORK POLICY



Rationale

As a school we value parents as partners in their child's learning. Education research tells us, if a child sees that parents are enthusiastic about education, they are far more likely to view their schooling in a positive light and be more receptive to learning. As such, care is taken to involve parents and pupils, as well as staff and governors in the process of developing and regularly reviewing the school's Homework Policy.

Homework and home learning can make an important contribution to a pupil's progress at school as well as providing an excellent opportunity for parents to become actively involved in their child's learning. Homework gives parents 'a window' on schoolwork and helps them develop a clearer appreciation of their child's strengths and the areas where additional support is needed. Homework does not just mean formal exercises carried out by a child without help from adults; it is the involvement of parents in joint activities, which is most valuable in promoting a child's learning. However, as children get older, homework provides an opportunity for them to develop the skills and attitudes they will need for successful future learning.

Guiding principles for homework at Woodstock Primary School

The following principles have been agreed based on feedback from parent and pupil consultations in the Autumn Term 2019:

- Homework is an integral part of the planned learning experience and as such, needs to be meaningful and engaging, if it is to have a positive impact on children's learning.
- A consistent approach to homework will be taken throughout the school.
- Homework should help parents feel part of their children's learning.
- Homework should help to promote independent learning and introduce self-discipline.
- Age-appropriate homework tasks will prioritise English and Maths and include:
 - The practising of:
 - Phonics (for younger children) – sounds of the week (see weekly newsletter)
 - Spellings - word groups, patterns and rules
 - Number facts and times tables – KIRFs
 - The development of:
 - Reading Comprehension
 - Language and vocabulary
 - Speaking & listening skills
 - Mental maths skills
 - Opportunities to apply:
 - Mathematical knowledge, concepts and procedures
- We appreciate that children can have particular interests and be motivated to undertake independent learning – teachers will always acknowledge and celebrate this.
- Occasional whole-school homework will provide opportunity for children to think creatively and produce their own form of response. (*Many children told us that they enjoy art/making type homework.*)
- The amount and frequency of homework will increase appropriately, as a child gets older.

- Homework should consolidate and reinforce what children have learnt in the classroom.
- Homework should never be too onerous, nor should it create stress within the child's family.
- Homework will be marked weekly by class teachers to provide helpful feedback.
- Homework tasks will be varied to engage and motivate children
- Homework will be set weekly for all children and will be clearly explained by class teachers.
- Support will be provided for parents on how best they can help their child's learning at home – workshops, guidance etc
- Parents will be encouraged to provide feedback, if relevant, on homework activities.
- Children will be reminded that if they are having difficulty with or worrying about a particular task, they need to speak to their teacher.
- With the exception of SATs preparation/practice being given to pupils in Year 6 specific homework tasks will not be set during school holidays. It is hoped, however, that parents will still encourage children to read for pleasure and practice Key Instant Recall Facts (KIRFs) - number bonds, times tables etc.

Our aims:

Based on the above principles, through homework we aim to:

- Provide opportunities for parents, pupils and school to work together to enjoy learning experiences and so support pupils' academic progress.
- Engage children in their home-learning by providing stimulating and accessible homework tasks.
- Foster the responsibility, confidence and self-discipline children need to study independently.
- Reinforce work covered in class by providing further opportunities for children to practise, develop and apply basic skills and knowledge, especially in English and Maths.
- Further raise standards of attainment and accelerate rates of progress.
- Prepare pupils for future learning.

Organisation of Homework

All children follow a regular programme of homework activities that is explained in their Homework Book. This information aims to ensure that parents and pupils know what is expected, when homework will be set and when it should be completed and handed-in. Activity sheets will include 'Helper's Tips' where appropriate, and definitions of any subject specific vocabulary.

In response to pupil feedback, homework is set weekly on a Friday with the expectation that it is completed and handed-in by the following Wednesday (this allows teachers time to mark the homework).

Teachers appreciate the need to acknowledge children's efforts in completing homework tasks, however, if homework is handed-in late, it may not be possible for the work to be marked until the following week.

There is an expectation that all children complete homework tasks. If a child fails to complete homework on two consecutive occasions, the class teacher will speak to the parent of the child concerned. If the situation continues, they will engage a senior leader to bring about a resolution.

Children's marked homework is returned on a Friday, when the next week's homework is set. Time is given for children to read teacher's feedback and talk through any points arising. Teachers will go through the next

week's homework tasks, working through examples if appropriate, for example in numeracy to check understanding. Children will always be reminded that if they are having difficulty with or worrying about a particular task, they need to speak to their teacher for support.

Reading - Expanding children's experience

Reading is a passport to learning and to the world. The benefits of reading go beyond the opportunities offered by being well-read with a good command of English. Reading quality text opens children up to ideas, experiences, places and times they might never otherwise experience in real life. Reading for pleasure gives opportunities to learn about a multitude of things that cannot be covered by a school curriculum.

While learning discrete reading skills is vital, recent research into reading shows that developing positive attitudes towards reading can also play a key role in children's development. Children who enjoy reading very much are three times as likely to read above the level expected for their age as those who do not enjoy reading at all.

We know that some children are reluctant to read to parents and this can cause upset. We do not want reading to be seen as an onerous homework task, when our aim is to foster reading for pleasure.

In **Reception and KS1** children are encouraged to choose a book of their choice from the reading corner; this is in addition to their reading scheme book which has a focus on the phonics being taught in class. Children take these two books home on their book-change day – we hope parents will share the books with their child over the week to nurture the desire to read and foster an excitement of the written word in order to promote a love for reading. Whilst regular practice is essential for young children to acquire early reading skills, it is the joy of reading for pleasure that will enable children to become a lifelong reader.

In **KS2**, an aspect of English homework may relate to an extract of quality-text or draw on the book a child is currently reading for pleasure to support the development of vocabulary and comprehension skills. For example, in **Years 3 and 4** children might be asked to read the blurb on the back of their book and write their own short and zappy version or to identify ten powerful adjectives that they could use in their own writing. In **Years 5 and 6** pupils might be asked to write questions to pose to their favourite character in the book they are reading, or identify ten adjectives and for each give three more adventurous synonyms.

Home Tasks in Reception

In **Reception** teachers send home a weekly activity to encourage and enable parents to be involved in their child's learning. The activities are designed to help parents and children work together on a small task that is based on the focus of the week. The tasks cover aspects of English, Maths and theme work. There is room on each homework activity for parents to give feedback on how their child engaged with the task.

Parents are encouraged to support their child's literacy development by promoting 'talk' and asking and answering questions, sharing books and regularly practising Rocket Words.

Homework Expectations

Teachers will:

- Ensure homework is clearly explained, achievable, appropriately challenging and broken down into bite size chunks to enable children to make progress and develop confidence.
- Ensure that home activities in Reception promote shared experiences between children and parents.
- Set tasks that always link to work children are doing in the classroom

- Provide a balance between tasks needing a written response and online activities.
- Include any tips they think will be helpful on the weekly homework sheet.
- Be mindful of the time needed to complete a task – they will endeavour to ensure no single task will take more than 15 minutes in Reception and KS1; 20 minutes in Years 3/4; 30 minutes in Years 5/6.
- Reward and praise children who regularly complete homework tasks which reflects their best effort.
- Set homework on a Friday with the expectation that activities are completed and returned by the following Wednesday. *(This gives teachers time to give feedback and acknowledge children's efforts.)*
- Provide guidance and support if children approach them for help with their homework.
- Provide book lists/website addresses to support research tasks.
- Not set homework during school holidays except for supporting important SATs preparation/practice for pupils in Year 6.
- Contact parents where an individual is experiencing a particular learning difficulty and would benefit from extra practice at home; s/he will suggest ways in which parents can give additional help and support.
- Remind children that the school library is available during lunchtimes to carry out research or other homework activities.

Children will:

- Take pride in the presentation of homework tasks and do their best in their completion.
- Practise spellings given in their weekly Spelling List.
- Practise key instant recall facts (KIRFs) in maths.
- Ask for support from their teacher or a member of staff if they need help or guidance with homework tasks.
- Hand their homework in on time.
- Act on any feedback about homework.

Parents will:

- Support children in practising key core skills by providing opportunity and encouragement.
- Encourage, support and take interest in their child's homework.
- Help to ensure that children complete tasks independently as far as possible and constructively feedback to teachers if children find activities too easy or too difficult. *(Homework sheets include a parent feedback sheet and teachers are always happy to arrange a meeting to discuss any concerns.)*
- Provide an appropriate space and resources for their child to complete homework.
- Talk to their child's class teacher if their son or daughter is worried about homework.
- Be aware that as children progress through school, managing and persevering in independent learning activities are essential skills to develop, if they are to succeed in their secondary education.
- Be invited to attend English and Maths Workshops annually in the Autumn Term, to hear about teaching in these subjects and how they can support their child's learning at home.

Equal Opportunities

Homework will take account of children's capabilities to provide an equal and appropriate challenge for all individuals, including those with special educational needs. Tasks should be at a child's independent learning level.

The governors and staff are committed to providing the full range of opportunities for all pupils, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, social, cultural or religious background. All pupils have access to the curriculum, and the right to a learning environment, which dispels ignorance, prejudice or stereotyping.

Review

The Homework Policy is reviewed by Senior Leaders, Teachers and members of the Governing Body every two years following consultation with parents and pupils. A summary of key findings from the consultation process is available on the school website.

Policy adopted by Curriculum Committee on behalf of the Governing Body - October 2019

Future Review October 2021