



*"We want everyone at Hillingdon Primary School to be happy, caring and independent. Our school is a place where we learn together, doing our best to achieve success."*

**Homework Policy**  
**Reviewed January 2015**

*"Well-organised homework can play a vital role in raising standards of achievement." DfES Standards Website*

*"Homework helps you learn. I like talking to my family about my homework and what I have been doing at school." Year 6 pupil*

*"I like having homework because it helps me build more confidence in my work." Year 6 pupil*

**1. Aims of the Homework Policy**

1.1 This policy has been created in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. It also reflects current government guidelines on the type and amount of homework that schools should set, including recommended time allocations for children of different ages.

1.2 Through this policy we aim to:

- Ensure consistency of approach throughout the school
- Ensure parents/carers have a clear understanding of what their child is expected to do and how they can support them with homework

**2. The Purpose of Homework**

2.1 Government research has shown that homework can make an important contribution to pupils' learning and progress at school. The school believes that setting homework:

- Provides opportunities for parents/carers, pupils and the school to work in partnership to support excellent standards of learning, attainment and progress
- Encourages pupils and parents/carers to share and enjoy learning experiences
- Enables parents/carers to gain an insight into what their child is learning at school
- Reinforces learning covered in class by providing further opportunities for children to practise and consolidate knowledge, skills and understanding, particularly in numeracy and literacy
- Encourages pupils to extend and pursue their learning beyond the classroom
- Supports children develop the skills and attitudes required for lifelong learning, by encouraging them to develop the responsibility, confidence and self-discipline to learn and study independently

### **3. The Amount and Type of Homework**

3.1 Homework activities should be linked to the learning children are currently doing in class, enabling them to consolidate or practise the knowledge, skills or understanding they have been taught.

3.2 A variety of homework activities will be used to enable children to consolidate or explore their learning. Homework may be set in many forms and not all activities will require a written outcome. Class teachers will ensure that pupils and parents/carers are informed of the expectations and outcomes for each activity. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Reading with parents/carers
- Learning and practising letter names and sounds
- Learning to read red words (from the Red Write Inc scheme)
- Learning and practising spellings
- Learning and practising number facts, number bonds or multiplication facts
- Games or activities (e.g. worksheets) to practise literacy, numeracy or other skills
- Researching information
- Planning or preparing a presentation to the class
- Solving problems
- Completing simple investigations using resources readily available at home
- Handwriting practice

3.3 Activities will be carefully chosen by the class teacher to reflect the learning and age-appropriate expectations for their class. Differentiation will be used where appropriate to ensure that homework provides the appropriate balance of support and challenge for individuals within the class. The guidelines below set out the type and amount of homework for each year group/key stage.

#### **Early Years Foundation Stage – Nursery Pupils**

- Homework consists of regular reading with parents/carers, including sharing and discussing books. The school recommends that reading or sharing books happens for at least 5 minutes each day. This also includes parents/carers reading a story to their child. We also ask that parents practise singing traditional nursery rhymes with their child regularly. Words for these will be sent home by the school.

#### **Early Years Foundation Stage – Reception Pupils**

- Regular reading with parents/carers, including reading and discussing books provided for home reading by the school (at least 3 times a week).
- Weekly practice in reading and writing high 'red words' from the Read Write Inc scheme.
- A weekly activity to support pupils' learning and/or independence. These activities will primarily be practical or speaking and listening based tasks. For example:
  - Counting up or down stairs
  - Reciting nursery or counting rhymes
  - Looking for shapes in the environment
  - Listening for sounds in the environment
  - Fastening and unfastening buttons/zips or tying shoelaces
  - Practising letter formation and learning to write their name (from the spring term onwards)
  - Practising letter formation and handwriting
  - Completing basic calculations
  - Solving simple problems

### **Key Stage 1 – Year 1 and Year 2**

- On a weekly basis, pupils are expected to:
  - Read regularly with a parent/carer (at least 3 times a week)
  - Learn and practise a list of spellings, which will be tested in school
  - Year 1: Complete a weekly numeracy **or** literacy task
  - Year 2: Complete a weekly numeracy **and** literacy task
- Occasionally, year 1 and year 2 pupils will be set additional topic-based homework which is linked to their learning in class. For example they may be asked to speak to an adult in their family about the toys they played with when they were younger, or to research information to contribute to learning in class.

### **Key Stage 2 – Year 3 to Year 6**

- On a weekly basis, pupils are expected to:
  - Read regularly with a parent/carer (at least 3 times a week)
  - Learn and practise a list of spellings, which will be tested in school
  - Complete a weekly literacy task- reading and writing are given on alternate weeks
  - Complete a weekly numeracy task
- Occasionally, pupils in year 3 to year 6 will be set topic-related or project-based homework to support their learning in class. These tasks are often designed to encourage children to develop independent learning skills. For example they may be asked to research information on a topic or to prepare a presentation for the rest of the class. This homework may be set for a longer period (e.g. two weeks, over a half-term) to enable children time to explore their learning more fully. Expectations for project-based tasks will be communicated clearly to pupils and parents/carers.

## **4. Homework during the School Holidays**

- 4.1 During the school holidays, class teachers may choose to set **optional homework** if they think it is appropriate to do so. Homework during the holiday period can provide children with an opportunity to consolidate or explore their knowledge, skills and understanding during this time away from school. Often, the homework set will be project-based, allowing children to develop their independent learning skills. **Although we encourage pupils to complete this homework, it is not compulsory.** Parents/carers are requested to speak to the class teacher should they require further clarification regarding optional homework set over holiday periods.
- 4.2 **In preparation for the Key Stage 2 SATs, year 6 pupils are set homework during the February half-term and Easter holidays. This homework is not optional,** as the tasks set are a valuable way of enabling pupils to practise the knowledge, skills and understanding they will be required to demonstrate during the Year 6 SATs.

## **5. Recommended Time Allocation**

- 5.1 As a school, we recommend that pupils spend the limited time completing homework. These time allocations are the total allocation over the course of a week, and therefore include any time spent on regular reading or learning of spellings or number facts.

**Nursery and Reception:** Up to 30 – 45 minutes per week.

**Year 1 and Year 2:** Up to 1 hour

**Year 3 and Year 4:** Up to 1 ½ hours per week

**Year 5 and Year 6:** Up to 2 hours per week

- 5.2 Children should be given a minimum of four days to complete homework. For example, if homework is handed out on a Thursday, the earliest day that teachers can request homework be returned is by the following Monday. At the start of each school year, class teachers will inform children and parents/carers which day homework will be given out, and when it must be returned.
- 5.3 All homework is designed to be completed within the weekly recommended time allocation set out above. If a parent/carer has concerns that their child is struggling to complete the homework activities within these time allocations, they should contact the class teacher.
- 5.4 Many children enjoy continuing their learning at home and may choose to spend longer on the activities than the recommended time allocation, particularly with topic, research or project-based tasks. The school supports and encourages this, but there is no expectation that pupils spend longer on homework than the recommended time allocation.

## **6. Expectations for Home Reading**

- 6.1 Regular reading at home plays a vital role in developing children's reading fluency, comprehension skills and interest in books. Each child is provided with a home reading book and reading diary that should be taken home every day.
- 6.2 **It is a school expectation that children read at home at least three times a week.** Parents/carers should sign the reading diary to confirm whether a child has finished reading a book, so the class teacher or learning support assistant can change the books as required.
- 6.3 **In year 1, 2, 3 and 4,** the reading diary is a record of the child's reading and response to reading, both at home and at school. The adult with whom the child reads with at home needs to sign the reading diary and make a brief comment (e.g. number of pages read, whether the child is enjoying the book, whether a child found any particular words challenging). **The reading diary should be signed by an adult a minimum of three times a week.**
- 6.4 **In years 5 and 6,** children should be using reading prompts to write one quality comment in their reading diary each week and log other times that they have read. Once a week the adult with whom the child reads with at home needs to sign the reading diary to confirm whether a child has read. **The reading diary should have a minimum of three entries each week that have been completed by the child.**
- 6.5 Children must have their reading book and reading diary in school with them each day. Books are changed by the class teacher or learning support assistant on a weekly basis or as appropriate. Books will only be changed once the child has finished reading the book. With longer texts or novels, a child may have the same text for more than one week to ensure that they have time to finish reading it.
- 6.6 Reading books and diaries must be in school each day to enable the class teacher to check whether pupils are reading a minimum of three times a week. ***If a child is not reading regularly, the class teacher or class learning support assistant will contact parents/carers to discuss why this is not happening. Where a child is persistently not reading at home (normally for three consecutive weeks), this will be referred to the Pastoral Care Manager or Deputy Headteacher.***

## 7. Role of the Class Teacher

- 7.1 To follow the expectations set out in the homework policy regarding the amount and type of homework set for their year group.
- 7.2 To explain each homework task clearly to the pupils in the class.
- 7.3 To set up an easily-followed routine for the setting and handing in of homework and communicate this to pupils and parents/carers at the start of the school year. Any changes to this routine over the course of the school year should be communicated to pupils and parents/carers.
- 7.4 To ensure homework is purposeful and links to the work being undertaken in class.
- 7.5 Where appropriate, ensure homework is differentiated to ensure children are able to complete the homework successfully.
- 7.6 Where necessary, to provide an explanation of homework activities to parents/carers (e.g. a note or letter home, an explanation written at the top of a homework sheet).
- 7.7 To provide children with regular feedback on their homework, where necessary. All homework should be marked and where appropriate a written comment given. Verbal feedback may also be given to the whole class, groups or individual pupils. This sends an important message that homework is a valued part of a pupil's learning.
- 7.8 To reward and praise children who consistently produce homework of a high standard.
- 7.9 To keep an accurate record of homework received and share this with parents/carers at parent consultation meetings.
- 7.10 ***When homework is not completed or it has been completed to an unsatisfactory standard for three consecutive weeks or three occasions over the course of a term, the class teacher or class learning support assistant must inform parents/carers to discuss the reasons for this. If this does not resolve the problem, the matter will be referred to the Pastoral Care Manager or Deputy Headteacher.***

## 8. Role of the Pupil

- 8.1 The school believes that homework should be used as a tool to support pupils becoming independent learners. Pupils should be encouraged to take responsibility for their homework by following the routines established by the class teacher:
  - Ensuring that they take their homework home with them on the day it is given out
  - Ensuring that they hand their homework in on the day required and understands that if this is not followed sanctions will occur.
    - Year 1 and 2- Golden time will be missed
    - Year 3 and 4- Playtime will be missed
    - Year 5 and 6- Attend homework club at lunchtime
  - Ensuring they have their reading book and reading diary in school with them every day
  - Completing homework to a high standard according to the expectations set out by the class teacher. This includes taking pride in the presentation of their work (e.g. underlining the date and title, using neat cursive handwriting)
- 8.2 If a pupil is finding it challenging to complete the homework, it is important that they ask their class teacher for further explanation before the day it is due to be handed in. For pupils in the EYFS and Key Stage 1, parents/carers may write a note to the class teacher explaining this.
- 8.3 If a pupil loses their homework sheet, it is up to the pupil to ask their class teacher for a replacement. This must be done before the homework is due to be handed in so the

pupil can complete the homework on time. For pupils in the EYFS and Key Stage 1, parents/carers may write a note to the class teacher explaining this.

## **9. Role of Parents/Carers**

- 9.1 At Hillingdon Primary School we strongly encourage parents/carers to support their children with all homework as it enables parents/carers to gain an insight into their child's learning and progress.
- 9.2 Homework activities should link directly to work pupils have been completing in class and as such pupils should be able to attempt them independently. It is important, especially as children progress into Key Stage 2, to allow them to attempt to complete their homework as independently as possible. However children may often require additional explanation or reassurance from parents/carers to help them complete homework successfully. The guidance given below explains how parents/carers can support their child. There may also be occasions where the homework requires children to discuss or share ideas with an adult. This will be made explicit to parents/carers on the instructions for the task or in a note sent home by the class teacher.
- 9.3 Parents/carers can ask their child to explain what they have to do, as discussing this may help pupils gain a better understanding of what is expected of them.
- 9.4 When pupils find a homework task challenging, we would encourage parents/carers to clarify any issues before the hand in date and/or explain the task to them, working through an example or the first few questions together until the child feels confident to continue independently. Some pupils also find it useful to ask parents/carers questions while they are working or show them what they have done so far to reassure them that they are completing the task correctly.
- 9.5 If, after further explanation, a child is still finding it difficult to attempt their homework, parents/carers can work together with the child to complete the homework. Parents/carers should write a note on the homework or in the child's reading diary so the class teacher knows that support was given.
- 9.6 When a child has finished their homework, we would encourage parents/carers to help them check their work, ensuring that they have completed the activity correctly. If a child has made a mistake, parents/carers can encourage the child to spot their own mistake and correct it themselves. If a child is unable to spot their own error, then we would encourage parents/carers to work together with the child to correct it. Parents/carers can write a note on the homework or in the child's reading diary to explain how much support they gave in correcting errors.
- 9.7 If a parent/carer is concerned that their child is finding the homework too challenging, they should discuss this with the class teacher before the homework is due in.
- 9.8 We would also encourage parents/carers to make it clear that they value homework. It can be useful to explain to children why they are completing homework and how it can help them with their learning.
- 9.9 Parents/carers can also support their child with homework by encouraging them to adopt a routine for completing their homework (e.g. a regular time for reading, learning spellings and completing homework activities). It is also important that a child has a quiet space to carry out their homework.

## **10. Differentiation**

- 10.1 Class teachers will ensure that all homework tasks are appropriate for each child. Some homework tasks, particularly spellings, literacy and numeracy activities, will be differentiated to ensure each child is completing homework at the right level for them.

## **11. Inclusion**

- 11.1 Children with Special Educational Needs are also set homework, following the same routines for their class. Where necessary, all tasks (including spellings) will be differentiated to ensure they are appropriate for the ability of the individual child, so that they can participate in homework in a positive way.
- 11.2 Some children with Special Educational Needs or pupils who are not making expected progress, may be asked to read with an adult at home at least 5 times a week in order to ensure good progress in their reading skills. If this is the case, parents/carers will be informed by the class teacher at parent consultation meetings or at IEP review meetings.
- 11.3 Gifted and Talented children may be set separate or additional homework tasks to provide them with further opportunities to extend or deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills.
- 11.4 Homework activities should only require resources that are readily available at home. Many pupils like to complete homework using ICT, and the school actively encourages pupils to use ICT if it is appropriate to the task.

## **12. Monitoring and review**

- 12.1 It is the responsibility of the Senior and Middle Leadership teams to ensure that the policy is implemented consistently across the school. The policy will be reviewed every three years (or sooner if required) in consultation with staff, pupils and parents/carers. Parents/carers are welcome to give general feedback to the school on homework. Comments can be made via the "Parent Voice" room on Fronter, through the Parent Council, or in writing via the school office.

**Updated:** January 2015  
**Review date:** January 2018