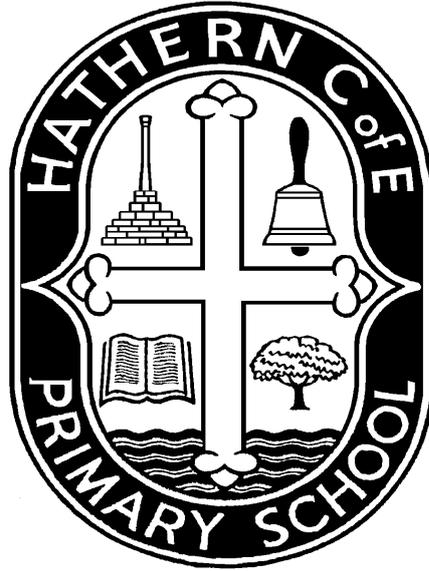


Hathern Church of England Primary School



Homework Policy

At Hathern Church of England Primary School, we believe in
'Learning and Caring Together'

Homework Policy

An Introduction:

Research has shown (DCSF) that parental interest and involvement in their child's learning and education is more important than anything else in helping their child fulfil their potential. It is parents/guardians who 'go on the learning journey' with their child, from the day that they are born to the time they become an adult. Home-adults play a key role in helping the child to manage the homework – school – life balance and ensure that the child makes the most of his/her educational opportunities.

Why we believe homework is important:

- Completing homework regularly and conscientiously helps a child to do better – according to research, completing homework in this way is equal to another years schooling in the primary phase!
- It provides a child with the opportunity to practice and extend skills and knowledge learned in school
- It makes use of learning resources in the home and the community that may not be available within school
- It encourages a child to take ownership and responsibility for his/her learning; this in turn will help a child become an independent learner
- A child will learn to organise and manage his/her time
- It introduces a child to forthcoming class work
- It helps parents/carers to become involved in their child's education and learn about the things that they do at school

What we consider to be good homework practice:

- All school staff working to the same policy and following the agreed guidelines
- Parents/ carers understanding the importance, purpose and expectations of homework
- Homework being set and managed effectively – e.g. the purpose and instructions for each homework task should be clear, and both pupils and parents should know how and where to get help
- Pupils, parents and carers knowing how much time is to be set aside for the task
- Homework being set according to ability levels and a range of learning styles
- Homework being regularly marked, with feedback comments to pupils, parents and carers
- Homework being spread over a school week and a school year
- Parents/carers/pupils establishing a regular time and routine for completing homework
- Monitoring of the quality of completed homework
- Homework being seen as important by all relevant stakeholder groups

Homework and Home:

The Parents/Carers Role:

Initially, as children enter school, parents are encouraged to:

- a) Listen to their child read
- b) Get involved with some basic, practical Numeracy or Literacy tasks
- c) Simply discuss or make things together related to Curricular themes

As a child moves through school, more emphasis is placed upon encouraging him/her to learn independently, but a parent's role remains important by ensuring that:

- Homework is completed on time
- Assistance, support and understanding is offered
- A quiet place to work is provided, away from household disturbances and distractions

It is not essential that a parent sit down and give their child time every evening; Parents can display an interest in their child's schooling as they go about their work around the house, walk down the street together, do the shopping or travel in the car.

Top Tip:

Praise, encouragement and a display of interest in a child's homework goes a long way!

It is sometimes difficult for a parent/carer to keep abreast of the changes in education. It is therefore understandable that parents and carers often think that what's happening in school to be a bit of a mystery:

Top Tip:

Parents/carers can try and get a better understanding of what's happening in school in a number of ways:

- Read letters sent home from school i.e termly Projection of Work letters (*at the beginning of each term parents/guardians/carers are provided with a 'Projection of Work' letter which outlines the themes for that term, providing an opportunity for discussion/research focused upon planned themes/topics at home.*)
- Read the school Newsletters
- Visit the school whenever the opportunity arises; look at the displays and examples of pupil's work
- Talk with teachers whenever the opportunity arises
- Attend Open Evenings and Parents Evenings
- Attend subject workshops arranged for parents/carers

Parents/Carers sometimes feel unable to help with homework because of their own ability/subject knowledge and understanding.

Top Tip:

Children thrive on encouragement, praise, understanding and even some small rewards from time to time. It is not the parent's ability that counts, it is the positive and encouraging attitude to their child's education that matters.

Parents could try looking at the information/task together; collect supporting information from books, CDs, the Internet, newspapers, magazines.

If a parents/carer still feels unable to help, there may be other possible helpers at hand – a brother, sister, neighbour, friend, relative.

Speaking to the class teacher, asking for further guidance and support, would always be encouraged and promoted as a useful 'homework tool'.

Homework completed does not always show the same level of commitment in all subjects:

This is not unusual; children often put more effort into subjects that they enjoy.

Top Tip:

A parent/carer could try to encourage their child to put greater effort into the subjects that they find less interesting by establishing a useful link to something that they enjoy or the subjects that have more appeal. Also it is important to acknowledge that 'we can't be good at everything!'

Is homework sufficiently challenging?

Class Teachers set individual and group learning goals for all pupils that will help a child progress according to ability rather than simply age.

Top Tip:

Listen to the children – they will soon state if they are bored or not sufficiently challenged. Parents/carers should look out for any changes in homework behaviour or attitudes towards a subject that might indicate a problem; these can then be discussed with the Class Teacher.

How can homework be fitted in?

It does take some organisation at the personal and family level.

Top Tip:

Parents carers and their child should try and establish a regular time and routine for completing homework and agree and keep to the decisions arrived at. Children should be encouraged to have outside interests, but should also understand that homework is important and that priorities will always have to be made throughout life.

It is important that parents and children note the time expectations for Homework; no child is expected to spend more than the allotted time, unless they want to, and 20 minutes, for example, well spent is better than 2 hours of prolonged misery and upset for the child and his/her family.

Types of Homework:

Whilst, from time to time, it might be important to finish off some class-work at home, we recognise that homework can take very many forms, such as:

- Reading
- Writing
- Numeracy
- Devising or playing a game
- Practising a skill
- Learning new information
- Researching information
- Discussing an issue with an older person
- Designing or making something
- Conducting an experiment

- Listening to music
- Watching and reviewing a television programme
- Project work
- Collecting and recording information/data, either within the home or in the community

Homework may be set in the form of a pupil work sheet; this is perfectly acceptable as this may be the most appropriate method of delivery.

Pupils are provided with an objective (WALT statement) linked to curricular provision and have the job of demonstrating their understanding and knowledge of the concept through their response.

Often the form of the response is 'open-ended' and pupils can creatively respond using a range of possible 'tools' – pictures, diagrams, sentences, Internet search material, printed images, photos... - the choice very much depends upon the task.

With each task there will be guidance from the Class Teacher as to expected outcomes in terms of the WILF – What I am Looking For – and these will guide the Homework.

Tasks set, if not clearly differentiated by outcome, MUST be differentiated by level of ability/challenge, acknowledging the needs of the learner.

Pupils are provided with a Homework Book and a small set of coloured pens in a zipped plastic storage wallet; this provides some simple, clear messages about the value of the Homework.

Specific School Guidelines:

There are now no national guidelines regarding the setting of homework in schools – DfE (March 2012). However at Hathern CofE we believe it is still an important learning link between school and home and consider the following timings appropriate.

Frequency of Homework: Expected Homework Timings

Pupils inevitably work at different speeds – some are often reluctant to do their homework, others try to do it too hastily, whilst some spend too much time on it. Discuss a task with your child, and work out together some time deadlines for completing different aspects of the activity. There may be a case for inspiring them to do better or more, or alternatively saying that they may need to reduce and simplify what they have produced/plan to produce

Year Group	Task	Timings	Day
FS	Word Recognition/ Sight Vocabulary	Up to 30 minutes per week	On-going
Year 1	Reading, Spellings Literacy/Numeracy OR other Curricular Work	Up to 1 hour per week in total	Set: Thursday Return: Tuesday
Year 2	Reading, Spellings Literacy/Numeracy OR other Curricular Work	Up to 1 hour per week in total	Set: Thursday Return: Tuesday
Year 3	Literacy or Numeracy or	Up to 1.5 hours per week in total	Set: Thursday Return: Tuesday

	other Curricular Work		
Year 4	Literacy or Numeracy or other Curricular Work	Up to 1.5 hours per week	Set: Thursday Return: Tuesday
Year 5	Literacy or Numeracy and other Curricular Work	Up to 2.5 hours per week	Set: Thursday Return: Tuesday
Year 6	Literacy or Numeracy and other Curricular Work	Up to 2.5 hours per week	Set: Thursday Return: Tuesday

Please note: At Key Stage 2 (Years 3 – 6) there is no ‘minimum expectation for Reading’; Reading should be daily in addition to the time allocation

- Homework will not be set unless the Class Teacher recognises the need for it in support of Curricular Study
- Occasionally, tasks *may* be set that focus upon encouraging dialogue between child and parent, developing speaking and listening skills and consolidating learning entered into during the week, or introducing learning for the following week.
- Completion of homework is strongly encouraged and the benefits stressed to the pupils, however, there is no consequence if homework is not returned.
- Teachers may set specific, individual homework to help a particular pupil, but this would be discussed with pupil and parent first.
- On occasion, when a child is absent from school for long periods, the teacher may arrange some work for the child to undertake at home. If the child’s authorised absence is for a family holiday, the school **will not** set homework.
- Pupils absent during term-time for family holidays will not have ‘Holiday Work’ set for them
- Holiday homework (periods of annual school closure) is generally not set for pupils, apart from those in Year 6 who are assigned tasks during the Easter Holidays prior to statutory testing (Year 6 SATs). However, we are to trial a Writing Challenge Homework in 2009-10 to promote Writing. This Homework is not compulsory and is open to any pupil who wishes to accept the challenge.

A Reminder:
Research states that completing homework regularly and conscientiously helps a child to do better and to make the most of his/her educational opportunities:
Homework matters!