



# Homework Policy

## **Rationale**

Homework activities are an important part of the home/school partnership. We believe that homework is an enhancement of children's school work and provides a meaningful context for learning. It enriches and consolidates. Homework should provide a balance between open-ended investigations or games and structured work to support literacy and numeracy. We would like children to consider homework a positive experience and not an onerous task.

All children are expected to complete a variety of homework tasks to enhance and support their work in class. Homework may not necessarily be written work but is any task that a child is asked to complete at home. This policy is designed to ensure a consistency of approach throughout the school. It is acknowledged that parental help and support in the area of homework will greatly benefit each child. Parents are encouraged to help children with the routine learning tasks and to hear reading.

The nature of the homework will vary between year groups. Teachers will consider how much time is appropriate for pupils at each stage, according to their aptitude. In addition to exercises which practise or enforce aspects of class work based mainly on the core subjects, children may be asked to watch a particular television programme, carry out a project involving research or collecting information, observe or record or undertake art work. Homework will mainly consist of Mathematics and English and occasionally homework may be given which relates to other subject areas.

## **Purposes and Aims of Homework**

- To consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
- To ensure progression towards independence and responsibility.
- To extend and support learning.
- To develop concentration skills.
- To provide opportunities for parents and pupils to work in partnership.
- To enjoy learning experiences.
- To provide opportunities to practise skills e.g. tables, spellings.
- To use other sources of information and develop research skills.

## **Teachers are expected to:**

- Provide a range of homework tasks and activities to consolidate learning in class.
- Ensure the children have a clear understanding of the tasks involved.
- Communicate their high expectations held of each pupil according to their ability.
- Communicate with parents and keep them informed of children's progress.
- Mark and return work to children as soon as possible.
- Respond to homework in a way which is helpful to the pupils.
- Ensure that the type and amount of homework given reflects each child's ability.

- Ensure that no homework requires excessive time to complete.
- Consult with parents if there are on-going issues regarding homework.
- Attempt to find out if there is a good reason for homework not being completed or handed in on time.

### **Pupils are expected to:**

- take pride in the presentation and content and set a high personal standard.
- be organised and make sure the books and equipment they need are not left behind in school.
- Take responsibility for handing in their work on the agreed day.

### **Parents are expected to:**

- Organise a suitable time and place for doing homework.
- Encourage their child to complete the homework to the best of their ability, and return to school on time.
- Help with basic queries and errors e.g. spelling words, looking up information, checking over completed work.
- Sign the homework diary/reading record to show that the child has made a good effort.
- Not persevere with the homework beyond a reasonable time.
- Read with/to child every night if possible or listen to reading on a regular basis.
- Contact their child's class teacher if they have any concerns about homework issues.

Parents will receive a copy of

***“Sion Mills Primary School: Homework Guidance for Parents”***

### **Guidelines:**

Homework should be a consistent feature of school life. Teachers may take time at the start of the school year to get organised and the issuing of the first homework may not take place until several weeks into the first term. No homework will be given over main holiday periods. 'Reading only' homework may be given in short weeks. There will be a few occasions throughout the term when, at the teacher's discretion, no written homework will be set. This may be as a treat or as acknowledgment of some special occasion or if a child has earned a homework pass as part of the Positive Discipline policy. When a child is off school for a period of time, but is able to work at home, parents may contact the class teacher to request suitable work for the child to complete at home. When a parent, however, takes a child on a family holiday during term time teachers should not provide homework for this period of absence. All children from P1 to P7 will be expected to undertake a variety of tasks to enhance and support their work in class.



## Home Learning in P1 to P3 classes

*Homework in P1 to P3 classes reflects the nature of work undertaken in the infant classroom. It is designed to develop children's language and observational skills, to extend their imagination and improve their confidence.*

Children in P2 and P3 have a homework diary and this outlines the homework, reading and spellings which they have to undertake each week. Parents are asked to sign this diary when the child has completed all his/her homework. Parents may comment at the end of the homework and this affords them an opportunity to highlight any problems encountered.

### Reading:

Regular reading at home, especially with parents, is encouraged. Reading books will be changed regularly and will be at an appropriate level for the child. A variety of schemes, including Oxford Reading Tree, Ginn Lighthouse and Alpha Kids will be used for shared reading. 'Storyworld' and 'Extended stories' are sent home to accompany the Oxford Reading Tree Scheme. Children are also encouraged to take home additional books to read, look at or read alongside parents. This helps to foster a love of books. A wide selection of interesting fiction and non-fiction books is available from class or school libraries.

### Spellings:

P2 and P3 will follow the Read Write Spelling Scheme

From Hallowe'en onwards, P2 children will be introduced to learning spellings. P3 children will have spellings all year.

Parents will be sent home details of the 'Look, Cover, Say, Copy, Write and Check' method of spelling encouraged in class.

### Written Work:

P2 children will have one written activity (Literacy or Numeracy) per week.

P3 children will have two written activities (Literacy or Numeracy) per week.

Homeworks set are mainly to consolidate the work being done in class and may take the form of :-

- letter formation/letter matching activities
- word recognition and word matching activities
- phonic activities
- worksheets relating to reading scheme /word recognition activities
- cloze procedure
- written work relating to other areas of the curriculum and using variety of forms of writing
- practise the formation of the new number.
- draw pictures to illustrate number
- make observations at home e.g. noting meal/bed times, finding straight/curved lines, handling money, seasonal changes, or measuring objects in hand spans.

### Other Forms of Homework

Maths or language games can go home or an online activity such as Mathletics or Education City.

## **Homework adaptations for the duration of the Covid-19 pandemic**

### **Primary 1 – Primary 3**

- Preparation of homework will follow Covid-19 protocol as advised by the New School Day guidance.
- Seesaw will be used as a means of communication by the class teacher.
- Homework diaries will not be used.
- Reading books must be returned on the requested day to allow for 72-hour quarantine.
- In the event of a homework book being sent home, it must be returned on requested day to allow for 72-hour quarantine.
- Some items will be sent home to be kept at home safely and referred to throughout the year.
- Preparation of homework to go home, will follow Covid-19 protocol.

## Home Learning in P4 to P7 classes

Written English and Maths homeworks are set twice weekly on alternate nights. In general children will have homework every week night, but not at the weekends.

All children have a homework diary and this is an important record of the child's homework. It is a valuable means of communication between home and school and this outlines the homework which they have to undertake each night. Children may also have a reading diary in which the pages of reading to be prepared by the children are noted and these are signed by the parents to show the work has been prepared. Parents are requested to sign both reading and homework.

The homework set will be a reinforcement of current classwork. It involves reading, spelling, tables and either a written or digital activity.

## Homework adaptations for the duration of the Covid-19 pandemic

### Primary 4 – Primary 7

- Preparation of homework will follow Covid-19 protocol as advised by the New School Day guidance.
- A digital app, for example See saw will replace the Homework Diary.
- Evidence of work will be captured and submitted electronically

In the event of lockdown – communication will be through Seesaw. A paper workpack will be provided initially, then tasks will then be sent electronically.

Signed: Peter Nulty (Chair of Board of Governors)

Donagh McNeelis (Principal)

Date: 30 Nov 2020

