



Sullivan Upper Preparatory Department

Homework Policy

Vision:

Our vision is that homework should be a consolidation of learning in school. It should not be laborious for parents or pupils. It should be an opportunity for parents to see what their children are learning and if they have understood their learning, by explaining their thought process to an adult at home. It is an opportunity for parents to support their children in their educational journey but not to be responsible for the teaching.

In the Foundation Stage Prep 1 & 2 homework should not take a long time and the focus should be on sharing books, reading with the children and asking comprehension questions, alongside developing awareness of number, phonics and High frequency words. The children should be working in a predominantly practical manner.

As children move through Key Stage 2, it should be completed with increasing independence to prepare our children for secondary school.

We believe it is important that children should have time for relaxation and other interests and activities outside of school. Whether this be through playdates, music lessons, sporting activities, organised group activities, family time or indeed others.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 It is the policy of the Preparatory Department that all pupils should receive homework in the belief that it is useful in consolidating and extending the work done in the classroom. In addition, it strengthens the educational partnership between parents and teachers and provides a means by which parents can monitor their child's progress. Homework is anything that children do outside the normal school day that contributes to their learning in response to guidance from the school. Homework encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and assisted by parents, to support children's learning. For example, a parent who spends time reading a story to their child before bedtime is helping with homework.

2 Rationale for homework

- 2.1 Homework is a very important part of a child's education and can add much to a child's development. The government made clear its commitment to homework in the 1997 White Paper, 'Excellence in Schools', where homework was seen as 'an essential part of good education'. We recognise that the time and resources available limit the educational experience that any school by itself can provide; children benefit greatly therefore from the mutual support of parents and teachers in encouraging them to learn both at home and at school. In the Preparatory Department we see homework as an important way of establishing a successful dialogue between teachers and parents. One of the aims of our school is for

children to develop as independent learners. We believe that homework is one of the main ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning.

- 2.2** Homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. We also acknowledge the important role of play and free time in a child's growth and development. While homework is important, it should not prevent children from taking part in the wide range of out-of-school clubs and organisations that play an important part in the lives of many children. We are well aware that children spend more time at home than at school and we believe they develop their skills, interests and talents to the full only when parents encourage them to make maximum use of the experiences and opportunities that are available outside of school. Perhaps a good way to think about homework is the way you think about medications or dietary supplements. If you take too little, they'll have no effect. If you take too much, they can harm you. If you take the right amount, you'll get better.

3 Aims and objectives

- 3.1** The aims and objectives of homework are:
- to enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development;
 - to help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner;
 - to promote a partnership between home and school in supporting each child's learning;
 - to enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered in sufficient depth;
 - to consolidate and reinforce learning done in school and to allow children to practise skills taught in lessons;
 - to help children develop good work habits for the future.

4 Types of homework

- 4.1** We set a variety of homework activities. In the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 we encourage children to read by giving them books to take home to enjoy with their parents. We give guidance information to parents to help them achieve the maximum benefit from this time spent reading with their child. We also ask Key Stage 1 children to learn spellings or mathematical tables as part of their homework. Sometimes, we ask children to talk about a topic at home prior to studying it in school. For example, in the history topic on Toys, we ask children to find out what toys were popular when their grandparents were young and, if possible, to bring examples into school to show the other children. At other times, we ask children to find and collect things that we then use in science lessons, and occasionally we ask children to take some work home that they have started in school when we believe that they would benefit from spending further time on it. When we ask children to study a topic or to research a particular subject, we encourage them to use the school and local library as well as the Internet.
- 4.2** In Key Stage 2 we continue to give children the sort of homework activities outlined in paragraph 4.1 but we expect them to do more tasks independently. We set literacy and numeracy homework routinely each week and we expect the children to consolidate and reinforce learning done in school through practice at home. We also set homework as a means of helping the children to revise for examinations as well as to ensure that prior learning has been understood. Our goal is to prepare our older children for transition to secondary level of education, where they will receive multiple homeworks from a number of staff with assorted due dates, therefore we practise aspects of this in Prep 7 in particular.

5 Amount of homework

- 5.1** We increase the amount of homework that we give the children as they move through the school. We expect Foundation Stage children to spend approximately 10 minutes a day doing homework; this may well include 'reading' or discussing a book with a parent. We expect children in Key Stage 1 to spend approximately 20-30 minutes per night on homework and children in Key Stage 2 to spend approximately 40-50 minutes per night, inclusive of reading.
- 5.2** We give children from Prep 4 onwards a school diary where they, or the teacher, record the homework, and where parents and teachers can make relevant comments as appropriate as a means of communication.

6 Pupils with special educational needs

- 6.1** We set homework for all children as a normal part of school life. We ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to the ability of the child. If a child has special needs, we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way. When setting homework for pupils who are named on the register of special needs, we refer to the Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Differentiated homework assists with, and is appropriate to, each child's individual level of ability. Through the use of the seesaw app, pupils can communicate their homework to the class teacher in a range of multimedia ways, they can take a photograph, type a note or make a video.

7 The role of parents

- 7.1** Parents have a vital role to play in their child's education and homework is an important part of this process. We ask parents to encourage their child to complete the homework tasks that are set. We invite them to help their children as they feel necessary and provide them with the sort of environment that allows children to do their best: a good working space at home which is quiet and not impeded by television noise and the like; by enabling their child to visit the library regularly; and by discussing the work that their child is doing so they are familiar with their child's attempts at homework and aware of any difficulties the child may be experiencing at a particular moment. Should parents believe homework is taking too long or their child is having too much difficulty with it, we would ask them to contact the child's teacher to discuss how this can be rectified. Parents can sign off on a homework and indicate a reason why on a 'post-it' for their child's teacher. If your child is finding homework tasks challenging then this also be a useful point for further discussion at an individual parent/teacher meeting.

Time spent:

- listening to your child
- talking to your child
- reading to your child
- explaining to your child
- and encouraging your childis time well spent!

- 7.2 We ask Prep 4 to 7 parents to check the home/school diary regularly, once a week, and to sign it as requested.
- 7.3 If parents have any problems or questions about homework, they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher. Should parents still express concern about homework, they should contact the Head of Prep.

8 Monitoring and review

- 8.1 It is the responsibility of our staff to agree and then monitor the school homework policy. The policy is also monitored by the Prep Committee of the Board of Governors.

Reviewed Term 3 2017-18

Reviewed Term 2 2023 - parental questionnaire completed (Dec. 2022)

Appendix of individual class homework practices:

Prep 1: Due to the nature of Foundation Stage, homework and any practices the children get outside the classroom with regards to additional reading, word practice, topic preparation and the like are always worthwhile, but not statutory. All practices do however assist greatly in a child's development. Currently, we spread homework over a week as the nature of the work is ongoing. We would ask that it is not done all at once but carried over the time for best effect. Homework goes out on a Thursday and is returned on a Thursday. Time spent should be approximately 10 minutes per night.

Practices include:

Guided reading book (and fun reader)

Weekly jolly phonics sound/ weekly phonics task on seesaw

Weekly First words - 5/6 per week

Weekly maths task / practical or outdoor task /ICT task or Numbots

Prep 2: This is the second year at Foundation Stage and whilst the principle of homework remains the same in that it is given out on a Thursday for the following Thursday, expectations are that homework starts to assume a slightly more significant arrangement. Time spent should be approximately 10-15 minutes per night.

Practices include:

New reader on Mondays and Wednesdays (to be read nightly)

A supplementary reader changed on completion

Weekly Jolly phonics sound

Weekly First words (10 of the first high frequency words per week)

Weekly ICT task or Numbots

Weekly Literacy/Numeracy or Topic task

Prep 3: We are now at the beginning of Key Stage 1, with the homework being given out weekly for completion (Thursday to Thursday). As the homework schedule is inclusive of weekends, this allows for working parents to facilitate homework at a quiet time that best suits their family. Homework should be a short task that provides the child with the opportunity to review in-class learning in a different environment. Children are expected to spend approximately 20 minutes on homework per night.

Practices include:

Weekly guided reading book school

Weekly sound & spellings covered in class - multisensory spellings (approx. 8 spellings) from Monday to Thursday. Tested in the Friday check-up

Weekly mental maths task

1 Literacy or 1 Numeracy task linked to in-class learning

Other tasks may suggested on Seesaw such as an online maths game, extended topic based projects may also be set in term 2/3.

Prep 4: With the move to Loughhead House to join Preps 5, 6 & 7, there will be greater focus on pupils completing their homework independently. All children may not receive the same homework and this is due to the need for differentiation in children's work and homework often depends on what has been accomplished by each child on a daily basis. Homework will be provided on a weekly basis from Thursday to Thursday. Children are expected to spend approximately 30 minutes on homework per night.

Practices include:

Weekly Guided or personal reading

Weekly spellings - 15 words each week with extension vocabulary. Set on Monday and tested in Friday check-up.

Weekly mental maths facts - set on Monday and then tested in maths Friday check up

Weekly Literacy written task

Weekly Numeracy task - written or Mathematics

ICT homework set half termly (6 weeks in advance) with one allocated per week

Prep 5: We are now at the beginning of Key Stage 2 and core skills are being built upon. Therefore, parental support will be very significant in helping children to incrementally improve and consolidate. Written homework, spellings, maths and tables, should take around 30 minutes per night. Homework will be provided on a weekly basis from Thursday to Thursday, except spelling which will continue to be set on Monday and tested in the Friday check up. Accessing texts through reading and audio books plays a significant part in children's educational development and should be an additional aspect of homework time. It is requested that parents sign any written homework or reading log before submission.

Practices include:

Weekly guided reading (personal reading) - 20 mins reading. Also read aloud with an adult at least twice a week. Write a comment & any unknown words in your yellow reading diary. Look up any unknown words online or in a dictionary.

Weekly group reading - should be noted by student in group reading notebook

Spellings - 15 core words set on Monday and tested on Friday. There will be a core list of linguistic phonics spellings. Differentiation will be provided as appropriate. Extension vocabulary - find out the meaning of the 5 weekly words and explore these words (antonyms and synonyms) - try to use them in your own speaking, reading & writing.

Maths facts - weekly maths facts for Friday check up test.

Literacy/ Numeracy/ WAU tasks X3 tasks per week - sheet in folder, homework book or online

Longer projects may also be set -based tasks may be given with extended completion times

Prep 6: This is the year before many of our children will choose to sit the SEAG testing for admission to Grammar Schools and, as we need to cover a considerable amount of work for such testing, there is an importance given to homework as a means of assisting this preparation. Homework, not counting reading, should be approximately 30 minutes per night. Children should target 120 minutes of free choice reading per week. The importance of reading at this stage, with particular focus on comprehension, will play an essential aspect of the transfer tests. Children should be encouraged to locate words in the text that they do not know and look up the meaning online, in a dictionary or via Alexa.

Practices include:

Weekly spellings- covering a range of spelling rules and linguistic phonics -tested on Friday

Weekly maths facts - tested on Friday

Weekly Comprehension task

Weekly maths task / Mathematics

Weekly grammar or World Around Us task

Spelling workbook - one unit per fortnight (handed in at the end of the 2 weeks) The focus will be on spelling rules / vocabulary for transfer tests.

February - June: extra written homework may be set, either in numeracy or literacy to support the preparation for Transfer

Prep 7: Children sit their SEAG Transfer Tests in Term 1 with the following practices and suggestions to help with their individualised progress. Homework times will fluctuate depending on needs; 30-40 minutes per night, would be a good average (not including reading):An emphasis will still be placed on reading and especially comprehension of texts and vocabulary. Homework will be set Thursday to Thursday, where possible. Spellings will continue to be tested through Friday check-up.

Practices include:

Term 1:

Guided reading: nightly assigned home reading of class novel with linked vocabulary activity

Weekly Spelling: booklet with SEAG spelling/grammar focus each week

Weekly Maths facts: online Mathletics/Study Ladder maths tasks to reinforce weekly focus

Weekly Literacy: 2 written revision tasks for SEAG preparation

Weekly Numeracy: 2 written revision tasks for SEAG preparation

Term 2:

Guided reading: nightly assigned home reading of class novel

Weekly Phonics: focus sound with linked nightly activities

Weekly Maths facts: Mental Arithmetic activity on Google Classroom to be completed online, with supplementary assigned Mathletics challenges

Weekly Literacy: writing activity linked to home/class reader

Weekly Numeracy: written task linked to class focus for the week

Weekly WAU/ICT: online Google Classroom quiz linked to Science & Geography

Term 3: This term has a focus on independence, transition and revision skills, requested following parental input re practices in the Prep which could be useful for Y8 work

Guided reading: nightly assigned home reading of class novel

Weekly Phonics: focus sound with linked nightly activities

Weekly Maths facts: Assigned Mathletics challenges

Weekly Literacy: writing activity linked to home/class reader

Weekly Numeracy: written task linked to class focus for the week

Weekly WAU: online Google Classroom quiz linked to Science & Geography

Weekly ICT: research homework linked to WAU topic

Parental questionnaire: Academic year 2022-23

Staff review of policy: Completed May 2023

Approved by the Prep committee of the Board of Governors ; 12th June 2023