

Homework Policy

Aims

We at Brookhurst believe that education is a partnership between pupils, parents and school.

We believe that formal homework (such as filling in worksheets) does not contribute significantly to children's learning at primary school level. We believe that if children are working to their full potential in school hours, then a corresponding amount of 'down time' is essential for an acceptable work/life balance.

We also recognise that many children spend parts of their day in other forms of care, such as out of school clubs or at a childminder. Therefore family time is limited and should, we believe, be spent in social interaction with parents or pursuing a worthwhile hobby or interest.

We also believe that many activities already undertaken by parents and carers at home, provide valuable support for the learning children do in school. These include:

*Playing games with children, such as board games, puzzles, word games (both verbal and printed), dominoes etc., which enhance children's understanding of literacy and numeracy. Such games encourage turn taking, sharing, listening and logical thinking, as well as extending concentration for periods of time.

*Other activities such as sharing books and going to the library with children discussing TV programmes, cooking, especially weighing and measuring, laying the table and counting cutlery etc., will teach them many skills applicable to the learning situation, as will imaginative play involving other children and/or adults. Writing lists, notes and letters as well as talking and discussing events will help children's literacy and oracy skills.

*As children grow older they are attracted to more sophisticated games, and these will help develop higher level skills, e.g. chess will help retentive memory, prediction, logical thought and planning skills. Playing such games with adults helps these skills develop, and they are fun!

We believe that these constitute worthwhile homework activities.

There are certain activities which we value as worthwhile strategies for reinforcing children's prior learning. These are:





Reading

Reading is important at any stage of a child's development and it is vital that young children are read to and with as well as reading or attempting to read for themselves. At the start of the reading process especially, children may be encouraged to make up stories to go with pictures until they can tackle print. It is essential that an enjoyment of books is seen as an integral part of reading.

Sharing text with children remains important at KS2. This could include discussion on a variety of books, fiction and non-fiction, magazines, newspapers, comics etc. We encourage the whole family to share in this.

Pupils will frequently be sent home with their reading book. It is hoped that parents and carers will share their children's books regularly.

Some tips for sharing might include:

-  Make a special place to read the book with your child.
-  Enjoy laughing at some of the funny bits with your child
-  Talk about what is happening in the picture. This will help your child make sense of the story
-  Help bring the book to life - paint pictures of your child's favourite characters and make up other stories about them together.

Spellings

As appropriate, pupils will be sent home with word lists which will be monitored and used in future lessons,. We teach children to learn spellings using the 'Look/Say/Cover/Write/Check' method of learning and ask that parents assist with this, whilst also encouraging a positive approach which makes learning enjoyable. .

Tables

When children understand the concept of multiplication they will be expected to consolidate their learning by committing the multiplication facts to memory. On occasions this will be set as homework. The National Numeracy Strategy suggests that in Year 2 children know their 2 and 10 x table, Year 3: 2, 5 and 10, Year 4: 2, 3, 4, 5 and 10 and by Year 5 they should know all their multiplication facts up to 10 x 10.

This is the expectation for most children however, some children will be ready sooner or later than others, this will be taken into account by the teacher.

Research

In lesson time KS1 children are given simple questions to research and in KS2 children extend their research skills and learn how to use the information gained. These skills will be re-iterated through homework. The role of parents is to facilitate this research work by answering questions or helping children to access information in books or on the internet. Research work should be undertaken and, in the case of written research, be written by children, and not their parents. At KS2, children are working towards writing in their own words. We would prefer to see smaller amounts of text written in children's own words, rather than larger quantities of text copied out from sources.

In Year 3, children are asked to find the answers to certain questions related to their topic work, and report findings to the class.

In Year 4, children are asked to find answers to questions and write these up in a form which contributes to their class work, at times reporting these verbally to the class.

In Year 5, children are asked to undertake research on part of the class topic or a related theme which contributes to their topic file as a whole, the presentation of which may be in verbal or written form.

In Year 6, children are required to undertake research on two class topics throughout the year, the presentation of which will be in written form.

Monitoring may include, verbal feedback, questioning and discussion or marking.

We will not provide additional homework for children who are absent from school through illness (unless this is long term) or on holiday.

We will not usually send work home to be 'finished off'. However, when a child volunteers to complete or extend work started in the classroom, this may be allowed.

We currently use a home/school liaison school book. This is used by children to make a note of information to go home or any tasks set to be completed at home. Parents are encouraged to use it to communicate with school. When such comments have been written by parents, children should show the book to their teacher, as the book will not be checked daily.

Review date: Summer 2010

Special Educational Needs

On occasions some children may need specifically prepared work to help them make progress in their learning. The purpose is to give pupils the opportunity to succeed and, importantly, is not a way of expecting them to 'catch up' with the rest of the class. This work may include social and other skills as well as developing skills and understanding. Where a child has an Individual Education Plan, homework will take account of that pupils personal targets

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy has been drawn up by teaching staff and agreed by Governors. It will be reviewed in Spring 2009.