

# St. Alphege CE Junior School Homework Policy



# Homework Policy

## **Definition – What is homework?**

At St Alphege CE Junior School we believe homework is any activity children are asked to do outside school with the help of parents or carers.

## **Context**

This homework policy is to be seen as part of the Home-School agreement, signed by all parents when their child starts school.

## **Rationale**

We believe that children learn best if there is a strong partnership between home and school. We understand that each child is an individual, making progress at his/her own pace and that homework should be a positive experience.

We recognise that all children need leisure time and so our policy reflects a balance so children can extend and consolidate their learning with parental support whilst still enjoying 'free time'.

## **Purposes – Why do we do homework?**

We believe that homework enables children to make progress by:-

- actively involving their parents, or other carers, in their learning;
- consolidating and reinforcing knowledge, skills and understanding, particularly in literacy and numeracy;
- extending school learning;
- apply skills learned in school to real life experiences;
- taking advantage of learning resources which may be available at home;
- developing confidence and self-discipline in preparation for Senior School.

## **Aims**

Through this policy we aim to:

- ensure a consistent approach throughout the school;
- ensure the needs of each individual pupil, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, are taken into account;
- extend and support each child's learning experience;
- provide opportunities for parents, pupils and school to work in partnership;
- provide opportunities for parents and pupils to work together to enjoy learning experiences .

## **Important Features**

- help and support from parents and carers is needed;
- children are likely to get more out of an activity if parents get involved as long as they do not take over too much;
- as the children get older they should become increasingly independent in their learning;
- parents should provide a suitable place for the activity and ensure that the children know that they value homework;
- encouragement and praise should be offered as appropriate;
- a regular 'homework pattern' should be established;

- reading should be a daily activity for all children and should include reading **to** the child;
- homework will primarily reinforce and consolidate school work;
- communication between home and school is crucial, particularly if homework appears to be a problem. Class teachers are always happy to discuss such issues
- a recommendation of no more than 90 minutes over the week, although it should consist of daily practice
- during Years 3, 4 and 5 children are given a weekend and a week in which to complete homework.

The main focus of home learning should be the development of reading skills.

This is because we recognise the fact that good reading skills are essential in enabling learners to access the wider curriculum as they grow and develop. This is also reinforced by OfSTED, emphasising the importance of children's reading skills.

Analysis of our children's reading skills has shown that whilst they generally develop good decoding skills (reading the words) they are less skilled at the higher order skills of understanding and interpreting texts and engaging with and responding to texts.

It is, therefore, a priority for us to improve this and we consider that home learning can impact significantly on this if we have clear expectations throughout the school which are shared with parents.

We want to emphasise the importance of children having the opportunity to talk about their reading and practise the higher order skills with an experienced reader at home *at least 4 times a week and preferably daily*.

- Children are required to record daily reading – this may consist of date and pages read. They should also complete at least three reflective comments in their Reading Diaries per week at home. You are also encouraged to comment and/or sign the diary each time you hear your child read.

We do understand that there are times when it may be difficult for the children to undertake their homework tasks (family visits, religious/special celebrations etc.). Teachers do understand that homework may have to be deferred, occasionally but we ask that you discuss this with the class teacher.

Class teachers will carefully monitor the return of homework. The parents of children who do not engage with Homework will be invited in to school to discuss ways of supporting their child.

- Children will need an A4 ring binder (not lever arch) folder to keep their homework in good condition, and to aid organisation.
- Weekly homework will be marked and returned home in the children's folder, so this can be shared with parents. We encourage parents to complete any errors with their child. This will not need to be returned to school, but can be kept at home as a record of achievement and reference.
- It may be useful, on occasion, if parents were to indicate the level of support that was necessary for their child to complete the task.
- All Maths homework should be completed using a pencil and ruler. Where necessary squared paper will be provided.
- English homework should be completed in blue pen (pen licence users only) or pencil. Lined paper will be provided for extended writing tasks.

<b><u>ALL YEARS</u></b>	<p><b>Key Stage 2 Evening</b> Guidance is given to parents regarding numeracy and literacy, the skills taught and how the curriculum is delivered.</p>
<b><u>YEAR 3 &amp; 4</u></b>	<p><b><u>Daily Homework</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reading</b> Children are encouraged to read daily in order to reinforce and extend decoding skills using phonics, clues within the text and illustrations. Opportunities for discussion with regard to characters and plot are invaluable. Children should read in an environment conducive to reading and 'quality' time should be spent on the process. Parents are required to record the pages read in the child's 'Reading Record'.</li> <li>• <b>Library Books</b> The library is open every day to enable the children to change their books. Children are encouraged to read a variety of texts, e.g. fiction, non-fiction and poetry.</li> <li>• <b>Spelling – Phonics, Key Words or Relevant Topic Words</b> Children are encouraged to work through lists of words that both consolidate and extend their spelling knowledge. A variety of methods are encouraged e.g. use of mnemonics, 'chunking' syllables. Look, Cover, Write and Check.</li> <li>• <b>Spelling Test</b> – A spelling list is given to the children on a Monday and then the children are tested the following Monday. Spelling scores are recorded in homework diaries.</li> <li>• <b>Times Tables</b> - Times tables tests take place during Friday's Mathematics lesson. Children are encouraged to learn a set table in preparation for the test. It is important that children learn both their times tables facts and the matching inverse fact e.g. <math>3 \times 4 = 12</math>      <math>12 \div 4 = 3</math> Tests results are recorded in homework diaries.</li> <li>• <b>Mental Maths / Arithmetic Test</b> – This takes place on a <b>Friday</b> and can be an audio test based on mental skills e.g. addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, time, shape and measure or written arithmetic style questions. The questions are against the clock which means the children need to be secure in all of their times tables and four rules of number. There are many activities on MyMaths that support the development of this aspect of Maths. Test scores are recorded in homework diaries.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Weekly Homework</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mathematics</b> Work undertaken during the week is reinforced through homework. This could include topic related activities e.g. shape, time, measurement or number consolidation work. MyMaths is also a valuable online homework tool. Children are provided with an individual log in that enables them to access homework tasks online. On occasion, teachers may set additional 'booster tasks' to support any misconceptions that a child may have had during lesson time.</li> <li>• <b>Literacy</b> A selection of tasks will be set throughout the year ranging from writing, grammar and reading comprehension.</li> <li>• <b>Enrichment</b> Homework may be sent to support the targets set for children with Individual Educational Programmes in literacy and numeracy. Other literacy material may be sent home in order to consolidate work started in class.</li> <li>• <b>Other Subjects</b> Science, History and Geography modules are, where possible, linked to the outside world. Homework that can be shared at home serves to enhance the child's knowledge and understanding of concepts and reinforces connections to the 'big picture' of the wider world. <i>On occasion, cross-curricular work, e.g. research, or a creative project may be set. This work will</i></li> </ul>

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<b>YEAR 5 &amp; 6</b>	<p><b><u>Daily Homework</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reading</b> Children are encouraged to read daily in order to extend their inference and deduction skills. Opportunities for discussion with regard to characters and plot are invaluable. Children should read in an environment conducive to reading and ‘quality’ time should be spent on the process. Parents / children are required to record the pages read in the child’s ‘Reading Record’.</li> <li>• <b>Library Books</b> The library is open every day to enable the children to change their books. Children are encouraged to read a variety of texts, e.g. fiction, non-fiction and poetry.</li> <li>• <b>Spelling – Rules, Patterns or Relevant Topic Words</b> Children are encouraged to work through lists of words that both consolidate and extend their spelling knowledge. A variety of methods are encouraged e.g. use of mnemonics, ‘chunking’ syllables. Look, Cover, Write and Check.</li> <li>• <b>Spelling Test –</b> A spelling list is given to the children on a Monday and then the tested the following Monday. Spelling scores are recorded in homework diaries.</li> <li>• <b>Mental Maths / Arithmetic Test –</b> This takes place on a <b>Monday</b> and can be an audio test based on mental skills e.g. addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, time, shape and measure or written arithmetic style questions. The questions are against the clock which means the children need to be secure in all of their times tables and four rules of number. There are many activities on MyMaths that support the development of this aspect of Maths. Test scores are recorded in homework diaries.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Weekly Homework</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mathematics</b> Work undertaken during the week is reinforced through homework. This could include topic related activities e.g. shape, time, measurement or number consolidation work. MyMaths is also a valuable online homework tool. Children are provided with an individual log in that enables them to access homework tasks online. On occasion, teachers may set additional ‘booster tasks’ to support any misconceptions that a child may have had during lesson time.</li> <li>• <b>Literacy</b> A selection of tasks will be set throughout the year ranging from writing, grammar and reading comprehension.</li> <li>• <b>Enrichment</b> Homework may be sent to support the targets set for children with Individual Educational Programmes in literacy and numeracy. Other literacy material may be sent home in order to consolidate work started in class.</li> <li>• <b>Other Subjects</b> Science, History and Geography modules are, where possible, linked to the outside world. Homework that can be shared at home serves to enhance the child’s knowledge and understanding of concepts and reinforces connections to the ‘big picture’ of the wider world. On occasion, cross-curricular work, e.g. research, or a creative project may be set. <i>This work will replace the literacy work so that the quantity of homework is not too much.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Y6 only</b>	NB Year 6 Homework is set on a <b>Monday</b> and must be handed in by <b>Friday</b> . This shortened time period is to prepare our children for the demands of Secondary school.
<b><u>Further opportunities for Parental</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information for Parents’ Booklet</li> <li>• New Parents’ Meetings</li> <li>• Parental Target Setting and Consultation Evenings, including hand-outs appropriate to</li> </ul>

<b>Guidance provided by the School</b>	year group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents' Council Meetings</li> <li>• Individual Interviews with members of Staff</li> <li>• Review meetings and Parental Guidance from Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo)</li> <li>• Guidance from LA Specialist Inclusion and Support Service</li> <li>• Guidance from Educational Psychologist</li> <li>• 'Open Door' policy</li> </ul>
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This policy was developed by the school staff, following consultation with the members of the Parents' Council.

**Lisa Waring**  
**September 2015**  
*To be reviewed 2018 (or earlier if necessary)*

<b>Spelling</b>	<b>Handed out</b>	<b>Handed in / Tested</b>
Year 3	Monday	Monday
Year 4	Monday	Monday
Year 5	Monday	Monday
Year 6	Monday	Monday
<b>English &amp; Maths</b>		
Year 3	Friday	Thursday
Year 4	Friday	Thursday
Year 5	Friday	Thursday
Year 6	Monday	Friday
<b>Mental Maths / Arithmetic Test</b>		
Year 3		Friday
Year 4		Friday
Year 5		Monday
Year 6		Monday
<b>Times Tables Test</b>		
Year 3 (also Number Bonds)		Friday
Year 4		Friday