

Farsley Farfield Primary School Homework Policy October 2012

1 Introduction

1.1 Homework is anything 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 parents to support the children's learning.

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. We recognise that the educational experience that any school by itself can provide is limited by the time and resources available; children can therefore benefit greatly from the complementary learning that they do at home. Indeed we see homework as an important example of cooperation between teachers and parents. One of the aims of our teaching is for children to develop as independent learners, and we believe that doing 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. However, 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 activities of various out-of-school clubs and of other organisations that play an important part in the lives of our pupils. We believe they develop their interests and skills to the full only when parents encourage them to make maximum use of the opportunities available outside school.

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 cooperation between home and school in supporting each child's learning;
- to enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered in sufficient depth;
- to provide educational experiences not possible in school;
- to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school, and to allow children to practice skills taught in lessons;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future.

4 Types of homework

4.1 Staff and pupils regard homework as an integral part of the curriculum - it is planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of learning.

We set a variety of homework activities:

In the Reception we give the children Communication Books to take home every Friday and they are expected to be returned on the following Thursday. A small task or piece of review work is stuck into this book for the parents to complete with the children. Parents are also encouraged to share anything that the children have been doing such as special occasions, trips, events etc...

In school, teachers encourage each child to talk about what has been written in their book. The Communication Book is also used for parents to make a record on the books that the children have been reading and comment on their child's reading. Appendices 1 and 2 (below) are stuck into the front and back of the Communication Book.

In Key Stage 1 we give children books to take home and read with their parents – preferably each evening. We give guidance to parents on achieving the maximum benefit from this time spent reading with their child.

Homework Policy

KS1 children are also asked to complete a Learning Log Task every 2 weeks. Learning Log tasks are described below under KS2 homework. Also in KS1 the children are set e-learning tasks on programmes such as Education City and Mathletics – children in Year 2 are encouraged to achieve a weekly Mathletics certificate.

In Key Stage 2 we set a fortnightly Learning Log Task in Years 3 and 4 and a weekly Task in Years 5 and 6. A task is stuck on to a double page for the children to complete. The task is predominantly related to knowledge and understanding that the children should have acquired in that week and is primarily an opportunity for the children to show what they have learned. In some instances the task might relate to research or be a pre-topic assessment. The double page should be filled with a mixture of text, diagrams, drawings, photographs etc... Appendix 3 is stuck in the front of these books to explain what is expected of each child. Examples of Learning Logs can be viewed in school. In KS2 the children are also set separate mathematics homework, which also may include times tables and should provide sufficient challenge, relate to the teaching from the week and be differentiated appropriately. Spellings are also set as a homework task – preferably weekly but at least fortnightly. Children are encouraged to read every night as part of the Extreme Reading initiative and we set e-learning tasks including Education City, Mathletics and Fronter. Children may be given the opportunity to develop their learning interests further through moderated blogging.

4.3 In KS1 children are expected to spend at least 30 minutes on the Learning Log task. In KS2 children are expected to spend an hour on the Learning Log task. All children are expected to spend 10 minutes a day reading at home.

4.4 Homework is marked according to the general school marking policy. Homework completed well is acknowledged and praised. There may be issues arising from the work, which the teacher will follow up in lesson time.

4.5 We recognise that children have individual learning styles, which means that some tasks can be completed in a number of different ways, while others demand a particular approach.

5 Inclusion and homework

5.1 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, and we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way.

6 The role of parents

6.1 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 and when they feel it to be necessary, and to provide them with the sort of environment that allows children to do their best. Parents can support their child by providing a good working space at home, by enabling their child to visit the library regularly, and by discussing the work that their child is doing.

6.2 We ask parents to sign a home school agreement and this is stuck into every child's book – in FS the Communication Book and in KS1/KS2 the Learning Log.

6.3 If parents have any questions about homework, they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher. If their questions are of a more general nature, they should contact the headteacher. Finally, if they wish to make a complaint about the school homework policy, or the way it is implemented, parents should contact the governing body.

7 Use of ICT

7.1 The use of ICT and the Internet has made a significant contribution to the amount of reference material available at home, and the ease and speed with which it can be accessed. However, our teachers expect their pupils to produce their own work, perhaps by editing something they have found, or by expressing it in their own words. The children are not achieving anything worthwhile by merely downloading and printing out something that has been written by somebody else.

7.2 There are many websites containing highly educational material which can have a powerful effect on children's learning. Our school website provides links to the sites which will best support the children's learning. Parents are advised always to supervise their child's access to the Internet.

7.3 Some of the most important educational software we use in school can be accessed by parents and children at home for free through 'remote access' to the network. If a child is lacking IT resources at home, staff will make these resources available in school time.

8 Monitoring and review

8.1 It is the responsibility of our governing body to agree and then monitor the school homework policy. This is done by the committee of the governing body that deals with curriculum issues. Parents complete a questionnaire each year, and the school pays careful consideration to any concern that is raised by any parent. Our governing body may, at any time, request from our headteacher a report on the way homework is organised in our school.

8.3 This policy will be reviewed in two years, or earlier if necessary.

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 1

Welcome to our Communication Book

This is your child's home/school communication book. This will enable us to share any news and special events with your child. Please use this book to tell us about any special events, achievements or maybe a new skill your child has learnt. You may want to include photographs, certificates, special cards etc...

The book needs to be back in school **every Thursday**. We will read the messages and encourage your child to share any news with the class. The books will be sent home to you every Friday. We would appreciate it if you could read the book every week as we will be putting in messages about what we have done at school and any tasks we have set.

Reading at home

Once your child brings home a reading book you can let us know how they are getting on by writing a message in your communication book. At the back of the book is a sheet should you choose to record the books that your child has read.

Appendix 3

Homework at Farsley Farfield Primary School

September 2012

We are going to continue using the very popular and successful Learning Log books as part of our homework policy. This sheet provides information about what Learning Logs are and how they can be used to improve quality and relevance of homework tasks. Please take time to read the information on this document and discuss with your child how he/she will go about the task of completing their homework.

Homework 2012-2013

Your child will have a range of homework tasks over the course of the year including:

Learning Log tasks

Regular reading

Maths

Spellings

Frontier tasks

Education City and Mathematics tasks

What is a Learning Log?

A learning log is a blank paper book which the children generally work in for their homework. The task set will be in response to learning challenges set by teachers, which are usually related to what your child has been learning in class. Homework therefore builds upon the child's prior learning. Each log is a unique record of the child's thinking and learning.

Positives:

- Promote independent learners.
- Learners become aware of their own thought processes and the strategies they use to resolve problems.
- Learners are motivated by the investigative nature of the tasks set and take a pride in their log, as an ongoing document of their learning.

Volume of homework:

Pupils must complete a maximum of a double page spread in their log (2 facing pages) for each task set. This can include a text, photos, pictures etc...

In KS1 children are expected to spend at least 30 minutes on the Learning Log task. In KS2 children are expected to spend an hour on the Learning Log task. All children are expected to spend 10 minutes a day reading at home.

Some examples of Learning Log Homework:

A Year 3/4 example



A Year 5 example



Please visit: <http://www.learninglogs.co.uk/learningjournals.htm> for more information and ideas – it's a great collaborative website.