

## **St Chad's Patchway CE VC Primary School**

### **Homework policy**

*"Loving to Learn; Learning to Love"*

#### **Introduction**

*'A good, well-managed homework programme helps children and young people to develop the skills and attitudes they will need, for successful lifelong learning. Homework also supports the development of independent learning skills, and provides parents with an opportunity to take part in their children's education.'*

At St Chad's we view homework as being a supported or independent task undertaken outside of curriculum time which reinforces, extends or enriches current learning.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of homework at St Chad's is to provide opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning. It enables children to practise and consolidate skills and aims to broaden the context of learning and provide enrichment and extension. Finally, it aims to enable children to take responsibility for their own learning, to become independent learners and to develop perseverance.

#### **Aims**

- To provide opportunities for parents and pupils to enjoy learning experiences together.
- To consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding, particularly in English and Maths.
- To encourage children to use a range of resources to support and extend their learning.
- To extend school learning, for example through additional reading.
- To encourage pupils as they get older to develop the confidence and self-discipline needed to study on their own, and prepare them for the requirements of secondary school.
- To ensure consistency of approach throughout the school.
- To ensure that homework is differentiated to the needs of individual pupils.
- To ensure parents/carers have a clear understanding about expectations from themselves and the pupils.
- To develop an effective partnership between the school and parents and other carers in pursuing the best academic and personal growth for each individual.

#### **Guidelines**

The main focus of homework will be English and Maths, however homework may also be given in other subjects, e.g. humanities and science. Homework will consist of formal exercises to be completed by the child but will also include activities to be completed jointly by the parent and pupil e.g. reading, research, informal games to practice mathematical or other skills, preparing a presentation to the class, making something, trying out a simple scientific experiment or cooking. There is an expectation that parents will support their children by providing the necessary environment and equipment to complete their homework.

We begin in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with exploration of the world, mathematical activities, reading and phonic practice. This continues to be essential all the way through the child's primary education. A child, when ready, is expected to learn to read keywords and weekly spellings and this then extends to writing tasks.

Maths tasks begin with simple number activities that eventually develop into formal tasks. This is supplemented by tables and number bond practice as well as mathematical games.

In addition to regular weekly activities, children may be given additional tasks that are differentiated according to age and ability. These may include research, reading in preparation for lessons, preparation for an oral presentation and traditional written assignments. Occasionally children may be asked to finish work at home but this will not form the core part of homework.

Teachers will establish a regular pattern for homework that parents will be informed about in the class's information letter, sent out at the beginning of each school year.

All children will be provided with a book or folder in which to record homework tasks. Parents are encouraged to make any necessary comments. Completed homework responded to by the staff (see Feedback section later in this policy) and kept in the homework folder or book for parents to see.

### **Role of the Class Teacher**

- To provide an explanation of homework tasks to parents when necessary and give guidance of how they might assist their child.
- To set up regular homework in an easily followed routine.
- To ensure that homework is set consistently across classes.
- To set homework that takes equal opportunities into account.
- To ensure any homework is purposeful and links directly to the taught curriculum.
- To reward and praise children who regularly complete homework tasks using a variety of methods including Dojo points, recognition in reward assemblies and rewards personal to the class
- To give feedback to pupils.

### **The Role of Parents / Carers**

- Parents are asked to provide a suitable place in which homework can be completed, whether working alone or with an adult.
- Offer your help and support for younger children to complete tasks. Expect older children to work independently, but make it clear that you are there if needed.
- It is essential that parents make it clear to their children that they value homework and are willing to support the school with their approach and explaining how it can help learning.
- Encourage and praise at all levels, creating a positive environment.
- Whilst parents are encouraged to support their child it would be helpful to the teachers if parents informed them if their child finds homework too difficult. This information can be given in the homework diary or reading record, depending on the age of the child.
- KS1 parents are encouraged to check their child's book bag for homework. Class teachers are explicit with instructions, but parents are asked to consult them if unsure.
- Parents are expected to listen to their children read at least three times a week, to support their progress and confidence. Even when children are free readers, listening to them read and discussing the text is invaluable in developing their comprehension skills. Please refer to AFL attached in appendix 1 for ideas on how to do this.
- Encourage your child to complete homework on the day set, as the task will have just been explained. If they leave it until the day before it is due in, they may find that they need resources that they do not have to hand. The setting of homework several days in advance enables children to develop skills in organising their time. Younger children will need your support in moving towards this.
- Encourage your child to take a pride in the presentation of written tasks. Work should be hand written by your child in pencil or a suitable handwriting pen, unless directed otherwise by your child's class teacher.

### **The Role of Children**

Children are responsible for completing tasks as requested (with increasing independence as they move through the school) and to take responsibility for organising any information or equipment they require. Along with age appropriate adult support pupils are responsible for ensuring the homework is complete and handed in in time. Also with appropriate support, pupils are expected to request additional support from school if they are unsure of the task or the expectations.

## Guide to the allocation of homework across the school

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| EYFS               | <p>Weekly, <b>spelling / phonics</b> and <b>reading</b>, plus regular <b>maths</b> activities.<br/>           Book bags are sent home daily. Two books from the classroom selection / library books are sent home each week.<br/>           There will be other homework such as exploring the natural world, holiday activities etc.</p>   |
| Year 1 and 2       | <p>Creative projects across the year, lasting between 2 to 6 weeks. Weekly spelling, times tables and number facts.</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> books are sent home once a week and the choice will be supported by the class teacher as appropriate to the child's reading ability. It is hoped that your child will be heard read at least 4 times a week at home.<br/>           Reading diaries to be completed by parents / carers (and pupils where they are able) to summarise the reading session at home, please refer to AFL attached in appendix 1.</p> <p><b>Spelling:</b> Spellings / phonics are introduced as homework during the first term in Year 1. Spellings / phonics are selected from high frequency works and from spelling patterns / phonics patterns taught. Lists of words are sent home each week, which will be differentiated for groups of children and link to the broad spelling / phonics patterns studied. Children will be assessed informally as part of their ongoing class work.</p> <p><b>Maths:</b> Regular maths homework will be set, often as a rehearsal of key skills (such as number bonds / times table) or a reinforcement of learning that has taken place in the preceding week.</p> |
| Years 3, 4 5 and 6 | <p>Creative projects across the year, lasting between 2 to 6 weeks. Weekly spelling , weekly times tables and regular Maths will be set reflecting classwork.</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> Each child brings home books each week. It is expected that children will complete a reading diary over the week, describing their interaction with the books (parents carers may also contribute); please refer to AFL attached in appendix 1.</p> <p><b>Spellings:</b> 6-16 words will be sent home each week, differentiated according to the children's ability. A weekly test will be carried out with the children once each week to check their spellings. The children have a homework book or folder which they bring home and which is used to carry out the spelling test each week.</p> <p><b>Maths:</b> Regular maths homework will be set, often as a rehearsal of key skills (such as number bonds / times table) or a reinforcement of learning that has taken place in the preceding week.</p> <p>Year 6 will have additional revision based activities across the year to support their SATs preparation and readiness for secondary school.</p>   |

The majority of homework will be given with a week gap before the hand in date, allowing many opportunities including a weekend to complete homework.

### Extension Work

Teachers will sometimes give homework outside of the above descriptions such as language games, problems to solve research on a topic being explored in class. Again, clear instructions on the tasks will be sent home.

### Completing Class Work

In Years 2-6, if a teacher judges that a child has not completed work of a sufficient standard in lesson time, they may require the work to be done properly as homework.

### **Homework during School Holidays**

Homework will be given during end of term breaks. On occasions, teachers may give children the opportunity to research for project work during any holiday period. It is anticipated however, that all children will continue to read to parents during holiday times, from either a reading scheme book or other chosen text as appropriate to their age. These books can also be supplemented with books from home or the public Library and if more books are read, school would appreciate this being recorded in the pupil's reading record so we too can keep a track of your child's reading experience. Year 6 children will be given revision homework during the end of term 4, in preparation for their KS2 Sats tests.

### **Special Educational Needs**

The above timetable applies equally to children with recognised special educational needs. However, the children will receive differentiated tasks according to their needs.

### **Planning and Coordination**

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to plan and provide manageable tasks for the children and to liaise with parents where necessary.

All parents will be informed at the beginning of the year of the regular homework pattern. This will include the day the work will be set and the deadlines for completion. Any child who fails to complete homework in Key Stage 2 will be asked to miss a break to complete the task, if this happens regularly parents will be informed. Children are not given homework when they are ill or absent for any other reason, unless in exceptional circumstances.

A sample of reading diaries and homework book will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team to measure how successfully the school policy is being implemented.

### **Feedback**

All homework is responded to promptly and feedback is given to pupils. This may take a variety of forms according to the work set, such as:

- class discussion about the work
- tests
- individual written or verbal feedback
- awards such as Dojo or specific class rewards

Parents are encouraged to give teachers any useful feedback. This may include:

- notes in the reading record or homework book / folder
- verbal feedback

## Examples of Assessment for Learning (AFL) questions for parents - reading.

| Reading Assessment focus  | Questions   |
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| <p><b>Literal retrieval.</b><br/> <i>Understand, describe, select or retrieve information, events or ideas from texts and use quotation and reference to text. Encourage children to describe, retell and locate.</i><br/> <i>Model the above, making references to, and quoting from the text.</i><br/> <i>Ask recall and simple comprehension questions during Shared and Guided Reading.</i></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where does the story take place?</li> <li>• When did the story take place?</li> <li>• What did he/she look like?</li> <li>• Where did he/she live?</li> <li>• Who are the key characters in the book?</li> <li>• What happened in the story?</li> <li>• What kinds of people are in the story?</li> <li>• What is happening at this point in the story?</li> <li>• Read the part that tells me.....</li> <li>• Where did you find the information about.....?</li> <li>• <i>What happened at the beginning?</i></li> <li>• <i>Which paragraph tells you they were out of the bear's reach?</i></li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Deduce, infer or interpret information, events or ideas from text.</b><br/> <i>Encourage children to compare, contrast and infer.</i><br/> <i>Model the above by making reference to, and quoting from the text.</i><br/> <i>Ask analytical and synthesis questions</i><br/> <i>Plan activities to develop children's cognitive and interpretative strategies.</i></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What makes you think that?</li> <li>• What words give you that impression? Why?</li> <li>• How do you feel about.....? Why?</li> <li>• Can you explain why.....?</li> <li>• If you were going to interview this character/author, what would you ask?</li> <li>• Which parts of the book could help you find the information you need?</li> <li>• Do you agree with this opinion? Explain your own opinion use text to help you.</li> <li>• At the end of the story the main character is feeling ..... Does this surprise you? Can you tell me why using the story?</li> <li>• What does this tell you about what .....was thinking?</li> <li>• Through whose eyes is the story told?</li> <li>• Who was the storyteller? How do you know?</li> <li>• Do you think this is true/untrue? Why do you think this?</li> <li>• What do you think the ..... is thinking? If it were you what would you think?</li> <li>• Which is your favourite part? Why? Which bit of the text shows this?</li> <li>• Predict what you think is going to happen next. Why do you think this?</li> <li>• Using all the evidence available, can you tell me what you feel about....?</li> <li>• Who would you like to meet most in the story? Why?</li> <li>• Can you support your view with evidence?</li> <li>• What is your opinion? What evidence do you have to support your view?</li> <li>• Is this a place you could visit? Why/why not?</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Identify and comment on structure and organisation.</b><br/> <i>Make very explicit links between reading and writing – especially the ways in which texts are organised.</i><br/> <i>Model the language needed to comment upon authors' use of structure, organisation, grammar and presentation.</i><br/> <i>Use genre checklists to highlight the layout features and language features of different texts.</i><br/> <i>Ask analytical questions and questions requiring synthesis.</i><br/> <i>During shared and guided reading sessions focus on aspects of structure and organisation, e.g. paragraphs labels, navigational features such as sub-headings, titles, etc.</i><br/> <i>Use structural organisers, e.g. story maps, charts, etc.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were you surprised by the ending?</li> <li>• How did you think it would end/should have ended?</li> <li>• How are the beginning and ending of the story similar?</li> <li>• What kind of a text is this? How do you know? What will it be like? What can I expect of a book of this type?</li> <li>• List the words that tell you what order to follow eg first, then.</li> <li>• What is the main event of the story? Why do you think this?</li> <li>• What is the purpose of the pictures?</li> <li>• How does the layout help the reader?</li> <li>• How does the way the title is written encourage you to read the .....?</li> <li>• In the leaflet, how have the different parts of the ..... been made clear?</li> <li>• What are the lines in the photograph for?</li> <li>• How do you know the order to follow the information in the text?</li> <li>• Why have these words been made to stand out?</li> <li>• Why are these words smaller but still in bold print?</li> <li>• Why are some words in the glossary printed in italics <i>like this?</i></li> <li>• At the end of the story the author leaves you guessing about what will happen next. What do you think will happen next? Why do you think this?</li> <li>• Why is this paragraph in bold print?</li> <li>• What are the subheadings for?</li> <li>• Why has some of the information been presented as a table?</li> <li>• What is the purpose of the writing in the boxes?</li> <li>• <i>In what ways is Superkid like a superhero?</i></li> <li>• <i>Why did the author choose to change paragraphs after this sentence?</i></li> </ul> |

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| <p><b>Writers' use of language</b></p> <p><i>Model and encourage the use of author intent prompts, e.g. 'it makes me imagine ...'</i></p> <p><i>Ask analytical questions.</i></p> <p><i>Plan activities to encourage children's semantic strategies.</i></p> <p><i>Use reading journals to collect and comment upon imagery.</i></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I wonder what the writer intended by using these words?</li> <li>• What do these words mean and why do you think the writer chose them?</li> <li>• How has the author used adjectives to make this character funny?</li> <li>• What do the physical descriptions of characters tell us about how they are feeling?</li> <li>• Look at the verbs/adjectives/adverbs, what do these words tell us about.....?</li> <li>• By writing the line in this way, what effect has the author created?</li> <li>• What do these words tell you about .....</li> <li>• Why do you think the author has mentioned ..... a lot in the story?</li> <li>• Explain what you think this phrase adds to the story.</li> <li>• Why did the author choose this title?</li> <li>• What is the effect of writing in the past/present tense?</li> <li>• Why do you think the writer has chosen to use the words .....</li> <li>• How does the writer encourage you to read the rest of the text?</li> <li>• How do these phrases help to make the description effective?</li> <li>• How does the author make the ..... appear frightening?</li> <li>• Which part of the story best describes the setting?</li> <li>• Which words and /or phrases do this?</li> <li>• <i>What does "a great armour-plated centipede" tell you about the wall?</i></li> <li>• <i>What do phrases such as "It is probably true to say..." tell you?</i></li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Writers' purposes and viewpoints and the effect on the reader.</b></p> <p><i>Ask application, analytical, synthesis and evaluation questions, encourage children to elaborate on their responses, following examples.</i></p> <p><i>Model and encourage the use of author intent prompts.</i></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you think of another story that has a similar theme eg good over evil, weak over strong, wise over foolish?</li> <li>• I wonder why the writer has decided to...?</li> <li>• What was in the author's mind?</li> <li>• Why did the author chose this setting?</li> <li>• How would the views put across in these texts affect your views on....?</li> <li>• Could it be better? Is it as good as.....?</li> <li>• What effect does it have on you as a reader?</li> <li>• Why do you think the writer wrote that description?</li> <li>• What is the author trying to tell you about.....by writing this section in .....</li> <li>(eg short lines)</li> <li>• What was the most exciting part of the story? Explain your answer as fully as you can?</li> <li>• How can you tell that the writer has this opinion?</li> <li>• What are the main contrasts the poet makes in the third and first parts of the poem?</li> <li>• What impression of .....does the first paragraph give you? In what ways is the second paragraph different?</li> <li>• If ..... was alive today would he be arguing for .....</li> <li>• <i>Does the author like spiders? How do you know?</i></li> <li>• <i>Was this text trying to persuade you of anything? How do you know?</i></li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Social, cultural and historical contexts and literary traditions.</b></p> <p><i>Ask questions that require children to call upon their knowledge of traditional stories to link ideas between texts.</i></p> <p><i>Encourage children to link popular culture and stereotypes to characters and themes in their reading (films, music, games).</i></p> <p><i>Use knowledge of history and outdated beliefs and attitudes to comment upon texts.</i></p> <p><i>Ask questions to encourage children to apply their knowledge and understanding of social dynamics to situations in their texts.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you know another story, which deals with the same issues eg social, cultural, moral issues?</li> <li>• What would this character think about.....? (Possibly a present day issue)</li> <li>• Have you ever read a book with a similar theme to this one?</li> <li>• What does this remind you of? What does it make you think of?</li> <li>• Have you ever been in that situation? What happened?</li> <li>• How would you feel in the same situation? What might you have done instead?</li> <li>• Can you compare ..... to something that has frightened you?</li> <li>• How would you feel if you were treated like .....? What would you do?</li> <li>• What do you think would have happened if.....?</li> <li>• Are there any familiar patterns you notice eg familiar story structure, imagery?</li> <li>• Many traditional tales have messages. What do you think this story is trying to tell us?</li> <li>• Which stories have openings like this?</li> <li>• Do you know another story with these characters in?</li> <li>• <i>Can you think of another story where the main character has problems with their family?</i></li> <li>• <i>The story began "Once upon a time". How did you know there was likely to be a happy ending?</i></li> <li>• <i>What is it about the language that tells you it was written a long time ago?</i></li> </ul>  |