Homework (Prep) Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1   Homework is anything a pupil does 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/carers to support the pupils' learning. For example, parents or carers who spend time reading stories to their child before bedtime are helping with homework.

2. Rationale for homework

2.1   Homework is a very important part of a pupil's education and can add much to a pupil's development. We recognise that the educational experience that any school by itself can provide is limited by the time and resources available; pupils 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/carers. One of the aims of our teaching is for pupils to develop as

independent learners, and we believe that doing homework is one of the main ways in which pupils can acquire the skill of independent learning.

2.2   Homework plays a positive role in raising a pupil's level of attainment. However, we also acknowledge the important role of play and free time in a pupil's growth and development. While homework is important, it should not prevent pupils 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 are well aware that pupils spend more time at home than at school, and we believe that they develop their interests and skills to the full only when parents/carers 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 pupil's learning;
- to enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered in sufficient depth;
- to provide educational experiences not possible on School;
- to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school, and to allow pupils to practice skills taught in lessons; and
- to help pupils 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.

4.2   Sometimes, we ask pupils to find or research things that we then use in lessons (Flipped learning), and occasionally we ask pupils to take home work that they have started in school (Extension), when we believe that they could benefit from spending further time on it. When we ask pupils to study a topic, or to research a particular subject, we encourage them to use not only the school library but also the local library, as well as the Internet.

4.3   In Prep, we give pupils the sort of homework activities outlined in paragraph 4.2, but we also expect them to do more tasks independently. Some subjects such as English, Arabic, Science and Maths are given homework routinely each week depending on the pupil's age, and we expect the pupils to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school

through practice at home. We also set homework as a means of helping the pupils to revise for examinations, as well as to ensure that prior learning has been understood. The non-core subjects such as Humanities, Art, ICT, Music and Saudi Arabia History are also set weekly homework tasks. In Pre-prep, Literacy and Numeracy homework is set weekly and this would include phonics/spellings and reading.

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. Feedback is presented in many ways and is given in order for pupils to respond to. Corrections or extending their work is a typical pupil response to such feedback. (See the Feedback policy for further explanations)

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

5. Amount of homework

5.1   Homework is given out each week. Pupils will usually have a week to complete this with the exception of reading. Homework is staggered depending on the year with the amount of homework gently increasing each year as the pupils become more independent. Pupils will also have various spelling words to learn each week which they will be tested on in the pre-prep years. From time to time class teachers will also set homework to be completed on-line. In addition to all set homework pupils should read at home approximately 10-25 minutes (year group depending) each night and discuss the book with an adult. Pupils will be able to choose and change books weekly from the school and class library.

5.2   We give all our pupils a communication book in which the homework is recorded, either by them, or by the teacher, or by the class assistant, and in which parents/carers and teachers make any relevant comments.

6. Inclusion and homework

6.1   We set homework for all pupils as a normal part of school life. We ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to the ability of the pupil, and we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all pupils can contribute in a positive way. When setting homework to pupils who are named on the learning support register, we refer to those pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEPs). We value and celebrate the cultural diversity of our pupils and their families, and we appreciate the enrichment that this brings.

6.2   If a pupil is absent and the parent requests work, a decision will be made on a case-by-case basis. Homework may be left for collection in the office by printing a spare copy. If the topic would need to be taught to successfully complete the homework, then it may not be possible to set

work. If a pupil is ill, then it is unhelpful for work to be sent home, rather it is better to wait for complete recovery. Homework set for absent students must be completed and handed in upon return to school. TEAMs/Seesaw is the online platform that can be used in this case and work can be shared between pupil and teacher.

7. The role of parents and carers

7.1   Parents and carers have a vital role to play in their pupil's education, and homework is an important part of this process. We ask parents and carers to encourage their pupil to complete the homework tasks that are set. We invite them to help their pupils as and when they feel it to be necessary (if they understand the homework skills being used), and to provide them with the sort of environment that allows pupils to do their best. Parents and carers can support their pupil by providing a good working space at home, by enabling their pupil to visit the library regularly, and by discussing the work that their pupil is doing.

7.2   We ask parents and carers to check the communication diary daily, and to sign it as requested.

7.3   If parents and carers have any questions about homework, they should, in the first instance, contact the pupil's class teacher. If their questions are of a more general nature, they should contact the Head of Year or Director of Studies. Finally, if they wish to make a complaint about the school homework policy, or the way in which it is implemented, parents or carers should contact the Principal.

7.4   We do not ask or expect parents to mark homework. This is the teacher's duty.

8. Use of ICT

8.1   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 pupils are not achieving anything worthwhile by merely downloading and printing out something that has been written by somebody else.

8.2   There are many websites containing highly educational material which can have a powerful effect on pupils' learning. Parents or carers are advised always to supervise their pupil's access to the Internet.

8.3   Some of the most important educational software that we use in school can be bought by parents or carers on a home-user licence. This ensures that pupils are using age-appropriate software in their work at home. The school will supply interested parents or carers with details.

8.4   We discourage pupils from bringing computer disks or memory sticks into school, because of the risk of viruses.

9. Monitoring and review

9.1   The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of this policy. Samples of pupils' work and of the teachers' planning is checked regularly.

9.2   This policy will be reviewed periodically.

10. Policy History

Date of adoption of this policy   August 2022
Date of last review of this policy   August 2022
Date for next review of this policy   June 2023
Policy owner (SLT)   Director of Studies
Policy owner (Chair of the Board)   Board