

Beckington Church of England Primary School



Homework Hints ~ A Guide for Parents

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TOGETHER WE CAN ACHIEVE MORE ~ with Jesus as our guiding light.

Homework is an important part of a child's education, and can add much to a child's development. It can make positive contributions to the learning of individual pupils. It allows further practice and consolidation and provides parents with information about the work being done in class, involving them directly in their child's learning. It helps pupils in developing self-discipline and good habits that will support them in their future education and beyond.

Homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. However, while homework is important it should not prevent children from taking part in other activities and we acknowledge the important role of time with family, play and free time in a child's growth and development.

This guide has been written to help parents support their child with homework. It identifies the role of parents, gives some useful tips, answers frequently asked questions and includes a guide to the homework given in your child's class.



Types of Homework

The homework your child is set may seem very different from the homework you were set at school. Most parents are very comfortable with the worksheet type homework, where children complete a set number of questions that are there to practise a skill and are awarded with a tick when correct. This type of homework still has a place but we also recognise that pupils who are able to use and understand skills and concepts in their independent work, make better progress.

Children are often able to successfully complete a short exercise (short term learning), but are unable to transfer the skill in their own work (longer term learning). Therefore, we set homework that may be creative or involve problem solving to encourage pupils to use skills and concepts in their work.

We set a variety of homework activities.

Regular homework activities include:

- Reading
- Spelling
- Tables

Occasionally we set other homework activities these include asking children to:

- Talk about a topic at home when studying it in school.
- Research, find or collect things about a topic.
- Practise a new concept or use a new skill.
- Complete work already started in school.

Many of these homework activities are set within a creative or problem solving activity.

Amount of Homework

The amount of homework given increases as children move through the school. We follow the DFE's guidelines and more detailed information is included in the paragraph at the back of this guide which relates to the homework set in your child's class.

Role of Parents

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 child, as and when they feel it to be necessary, but ask them not to complete the homework for the child. We encourage parents to provide their child 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. We ask parents to check and to contribute to the home-school diary. Feedback about how well the child has completed their homework is valuable.

If parents have any questions about homework, they should, in the first instance contact the child's class teacher. They will be only too happy to help. If their questions are of a more general nature, they should contact the headteacher.

Homework Hints

- Assume your child will have reading to do every night. (This should be reading with an adult.)
- It's a good idea to plan with your child when homework is to be done. The time needs to be workable for everyone ~ both the family's schedule and your child's needs. (It can help to set a family "quiet time" where you and your child can work together on homework, reading, letter writing and playing games etc.)
- Decide with your child where the best place is for completing homework. Set up a quiet comfortable study area with good lighting away from distractions. This can be almost any place in your home; you don't need a special room.
- Show your child that you think homework is important. If you are at work during homework time, ask to see their work when you get home.
- Ask your child if they understand their homework. If they do not, work on a few examples or ideas together.
- Don't do your child's work for them. Help them learn how to do it themselves. Children are very good at getting parents to do as much of their homework as possible - let them have a go.
- Praise your child for doing well. Make praise a habit.
- Do get in touch with the teacher if you and your child don't understand the work set or if your child is having a great deal of trouble. Almost all parents run into these problems, and teachers are glad to help.
- Set your child a time limit for completing work.

Remember:

Provide Direction ~ But Not Directions

Many children do need help with their homework, but it is important to help in ways that will lead to independence. Before they've even glanced at instructions or opened their books children will often show their parents their homework and say, "I don't get it." The children have worked out that, why spend time thinking about what to do when Mum or Dad will do it for me.

In this case instead of reading the instructions to yourself and explaining them, ask your child to read the instructions aloud to you. This enables children to hear the directions, which is often all that's needed to make the work clear.

Offer Guidance and Support When Needed

If your child is one who needs individual support and attention both at school and at home, tackle tasks one at a time. Go over the instructions and materials with your child, making sure they understand what needs to be done. Talk about what needs to be completed. The goal is to nurture and help your child believe in their ability to be successful.

You may encourage your child to edit their work, for example to put in capital letters, but please don't do it for them. If your child has required a lot of support please note this on the work. The teacher will be very grateful to receive these comments.



Frequently Asked Questions

Do teachers really want me to ask them questions about homework?

Yes. Teachers are happy to answer questions.

How much help should I give?

This depends on your child's age and ability. Younger children often need more homework help. First, make sure the child understands what to do. Do a few examples together, or discuss a few ideas, if necessary. When your child is finished check the work. Praise the right answers, or good ideas, and show how to correct mistakes. Avoid doing your child's homework for them. Teachers need to see where your child is having trouble ~ note any difficulties in the home school diary or homework planner.

One of the most helpful things you can do is show your child that you think homework is important. Do discuss their homework with them, ask questions and be supportive.

What if I don't understand my child's homework?

Teaching techniques and strategies change over the years. You don't have to be an expert to help with homework; you can still help by encouraging and praising your child. If unsure do ask your child's teacher they will only be too happy to help.

My child tries hard but still has problems with homework?

There could be a number of reasons for your child's problem. Note any difficulties in the home-link book and suggest that your child speaks to the teacher. Tell your child it's good to ask the teacher about homework or anything you don't understand. If your child is still experiencing difficulties make an appointment to see the teacher.

My child seems bored by homework. Is this normal?

It's normal for children not to want to do their homework. But if your child always seems bored or unhappy, you need to find out the reason by talking with your child. Then talk with the teacher.

Can my child do homework while watching television?

Some children can work with music but others work best in silence. Television can be a big problem and it is best to leave it off during homework time.

When I ask my child if they have homework, they say they don't have any, or they've already finished it. How do I make sure they are doing their work?

Children should be reading everyday as part of their homework and should be encouraged to do so. Always check in their home-link book. Ask children to show you their homework so that you can check it. Teachers like to see that adults have checked children's homework.

Should I reward my child for doing homework?

Children like to know when they have done a good job. Your approval means a lot. Praise your child's work often. Show pride when your child does their best.

My child spends too long on homework?

Children do work at different speeds and some children enjoy completing homework and are happy to spend time to make a piece of work the best they can. For other children, they are turned off homework because it takes them too long and impacts on family life. Do let the teacher know if you feel your child is working for too long on their homework. If your child works independently then do check they are actually working on their homework and not doing other activities in their room, ie. watching the T.V. If your child has worked for the expected times outlined on the next few pages then do stop your child and put a comment to tell the teacher that this is what they completed and put down the amount of time.

Amount of Time Spent on Homework

At Packington we expect children in Key Stage 1 to spend approximately one hour a week doing homework, the major part of this will be reading with an adult.

HOMEWORK FOR PUPILS IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Types of Homework Set and When



- Reading ~ every day (when children are ready they will be given Reading books from school).
- Phonics follow-up work sent home on Thursday.
- Occasional homework is given related to topic work e.g. questionnaires.

Pupils are given a Home School Diary (a small pink book) ~ Parents can make comments and send messages via the Home School Diary.

HOMEWORK FOR PUPILS IN YEAR 1

Types of Homework Set and When



- Reading ~ every day.
- Spellings, when given ~ sent out on a Friday, and tested the following Friday.
- Occasional homework is given related to topic work e.g. questionnaires.

HOMEWORK FOR PUPILS IN YEAR 2

Types of Homework Set and When



- Reading ~ every day.
- Spellings ~ handed out on a Friday, and tested the following Friday.
- My Choice task given at the start of the half term. To be returned the Wednesday after the holiday.

Pupils are given a Home School Diary (a small red book) ~ Parents can make comments and send messages via the Home School Diary.

HOMEWORK FOR PUPILS IN Y3 and Y4

Amount of Time Spent on Homework

We expect children in years 3 and 4 to spend approximately 1.5 hours per week on homework, this will include 15-20 minutes reading per day, spellings and tables.

Types of Homework Set and When



- Reading ~ every day
- Spellings ~ given out on a Thursday, and tested the following Thursday.
- Times Tables ~ given out on a Thursday, and tested the following Thursday.
- My Choice task given on a Friday every two weeks. To be returned 12 days later on the Wednesday.

Parents can make comments about reading in the School Planner, also used to record homework. Parents can make comments and send in messages via the planner.

HOMEWORK FOR PUPILS IN Y5 and Y6

Amount of Time Spent on Homework



We expect children in years 5 and 6 to spend approximately 2.5 hours per week on homework; this will include 15-20 minutes reading per day, spellings and tables.

We expect our older children to take responsibility for noting down set homework in their School Planners and the completion of their homework.

Types of Homework Set and When

- Reading ~ every day
- Spellings ~ set Monday and tested the following Friday
- Tables ~ set Monday and tested the following Friday
- Pupils will be set subject specific work ~ Handed out on Monday to be returned the following Friday of that week.

Parents can make comments and send messages via the School Planner. The pupils are expected to inform the class teacher if there is a message.