

ARK FEDERATION

HOMEWORK POLICY



This policy was adopted by the Teaching & Learning Committee of the Ark Federation Governing Body at the meeting on 27 January 2016.

It will be reviewed annually.

Signed.....

(Mrs Gill McMenemy, Chair of Teaching and Learning committee)

This policy has been developed through consultation with staff, governors and parents.

INTRODUCTION

At the Ark Federation we recognise the vital role parents play in the education of their children. We strongly believe in the value of home-school partnership, of which our homework policy is an important element.

HOMEWORK - A DEFINITION

Homework is defined as any work or activities which pupils are asked to do outside lesson time, either on their own or with parents or carers. At All Saints/Beer we see work done at home as a valuable part of school work.

THE PURPOSE OF HOMEWORK

The school regards the purpose of homework as being to:

- develop an effective partnership between the school and parents and other carers in pursuing the aims of the school and the development of their child.
- consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding, particularly in English and Mathematics;
- encourage pupils as they get older to develop the confidence and self discipline needed to study on their own, and to prepare them for the requirements of secondary school.

At the Ark Federation teaching staff recognise that pupils who have spent a busy structured day at school need time to relax and unwind at the end of the afternoon.

We are also mindful of the need to encourage children to pursue out-of-school activities, e.g. swimming, ballet, Beavers, Brownies, music lessons etc.

Homework should be used to effectively reinforce and consolidate what is learned in school. We hope that children will feel a sense of personal satisfaction in a task completed well and that their efforts will be recognised and praised both at home and at school.

Homework tasks should be undertaken to the best of their ability. We hope parents and carers will be willing and able to give their active support to ensure that work done at home is completed conscientiously and in the best possible conditions.

THE NATURE OF HOMEWORK

The nature of homework will change as children get older. For children in Foundation and Key Stage 1, developing a partnership with parents and carers, and involving them actively in children's learning is a key objective.

Short activities of different kinds – reading together, learning spellings, shared games and number facts - provide a very important opportunity for young children to talk about what they are learning to an interested adult, and to practise key skills in a supportive environment.

As children get older, homework provides an opportunity for them to develop the skills of independent learning, which they will need to continue lifelong learning and this should increasingly become its main purpose.

It is important that children should gradually get into the habit of regularly devoting periods of time, which may not be long, to study on their own. By the time children reach Year 6 their homework programme will cover a wide range of tasks and curriculum content, with a regular weekly schedule. This approach will benefit their learning and also ensure that, in relation to homework as much as to other aspects, their transition to Year 7/Secondary school is as smooth as possible.

Homework will be differentiated to take account of individual pupils needs.

CURRENT PRACTICE

At the beginning of the academic year, each year group will be informed of what is expected of them with regard to homework. A letter will be sent home at the start of each year to provide parents with the same information so that all parties are clear about the amount of time to spend each week on homework, when it will be sent out and when it must be handed in. Extra tasks to be carried out during the week, such as reading, will also be outlined.

Homework will be provided for pupils to consolidate or revise particular skills. In the Foundation Stage pupils will be set regular tasks linked to Phonics, Reading and Maths.

In key Stage one and two pupils will be set regular tasks linked to English, Maths and topic work.

Across the school all children will be encouraged to focus on their current targets where appropriate.

Home Reading

The importance of reading at home cannot be over-emphasised and we hope that children will read for pleasure in their own time.

Foundation and Key Stage One pupils will be provided with a suitable school reading book, which can be taken home to read with a parent or other adult. A record book will be provided for parents to sign when they have listened to or read to their child.

Pupils in Key Stage Two will be expected to take responsibility for their own reading books as necessary. Teachers will keep a record of the amount of reading that is taking place and the types of texts that are being chosen. Parental involvement is still very much encouraged.

THE TIME TO BE SPENT ON HOMEWORK

The Government's historic recommended time allocation, based on current good practice, is set out in Homework: Guidelines for Primary Schools and Secondary Schools, and we endeavour to follow this guidance in the amount of time that we ask pupils to spend on their homework. These guidelines and the types of activities that children might be expected to undertake are given below.

YEAR GROUP AMOUNT ACTIVITIES

Foundation and KS1

The children will spend up to half an hour a week on focused homework tasks. In addition to this reading and sharing books should be a daily activity.

Years 3 and 4

The children will spend 30 minutes per week for English and 30 minutes per week for Mathematics. However, as previously mentioned, homework for other subjects may also be assigned replacing either English or Maths. In addition to this daily reading and regular practise on multiplication tables is expected.

Years 5 and 6

The children will spend up to two and half hours per week, primarily focusing on English and Maths. However, homework for other subjects may also be assigned. In addition to this daily reading and regular practise on multiplication tables is expected.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

Setting the right type and amount of homework for children with special educational needs will need careful consideration by the class teacher and co-ordination with both the SENCo and parents. The objectives of homework outlined in this policy should apply equally to pupils with special educational needs as it is important that they should do as much in common with other children as possible. Homework tasks for children with SEN should:

- have a very clear focus and time-guideline;
- give plenty of opportunities for pupils to succeed;
- help develop social as well as other skills where necessary;
- be varied - and not purely written assignments;
- be manageable for teachers

We are mindful that specific tasks in the form of Individual Education Plans for children with Special Educational Needs will be set. Parents will be made aware of this as appropriate.

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL, TEACHERS, PARENTS AND CARERS IN SUPPORTING PUPILS WITH HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

Role of the school

- . monitor the effectiveness of the homework policy each year
- . support parents with the newer methods of teaching in English and Mathematics by offering parent meetings where appropriate to put into context the development of English and Mathematics skills from Foundation through to Year Six

Role of the class teacher

- . Plan homework as an integral part of curriculum planning
- . inform pupils of homework tasks through discussion in class and provide feedback to parents when difficulties occur.
- . match homework, as far as possible, to the ability of the children
- . provide feedback which encourages pupils to regularly complete tasks
- . provide feedback appropriate to the task e.g. individual comment from the teacher, verbal or written
- mark the task within an acceptable timeframe
- read Foundation and KS1 diary entry written by pupils or parents regularly
- recognise homework achievement through assemblies

Role of the parents/carers

The school recognises that parents and carers have a key role to play in supporting pupils' homework. The nature of this role will change as children get older. For much of their homework, particularly with younger children, parents and carers will be encouraged to become actively involved in joint homework activities.

To avoid 'battles' over homework we recommend:-

- that children should be allowed to work at an appropriate pace;
- the task is undertaken at an appropriate time when the child is best able to concentrate;
- the child may need lots of encouragement, praise and even your company and help for certain tasks;
- that work at home is perceived as a shared activity;
- work at home should be planned carefully around other interests to avoid clashes;
- it should not be used as a threat or punishment.

Your HELP, ENCOURAGEMENT and PRAISE is the key to success.

We ask you to provide a reasonably peaceful, suitable place in which pupils can do their homework – alone, or more often for younger children, together with an adult. We do not envisage a primary school child spending time in isolation with work he or she may find difficult. Give support and help but do not do the work for the children. Please support children in completing tasks and return work in a tidy presentable state.

Concerns

If any child does not understand a task, parents should encourage them to ask their teacher for further guidance in advance of the deadline. If you have any concerns about the levels of homework or the content etc., please see your child's class teacher. Do not let your child get upset about homework; if there is a problem come in and speak to the teacher about it.

FEEDBACK

The school recognises the importance of providing prompt and accurate feedback to pupils on how well homework tasks have been tackled and the knowledge, skills and understanding that are being developed. A variety of methods will be used to provide feedback ranging from an appropriate comment of praise, appreciation or area for improvement and these will vary according to the age of the pupil.
