

## Spean Bridge Primary School Homework Policy

### Rationale for homework

Homework is a very important part of a child's education and can add much to a child's development. The government made clear its commitment to homework in the 1997 White Paper, 'Excellence in Schools', where homework was seen as 'an essential part of good education'. We recognise that the time and resources available limit the educational experience that any school by itself can provide; children benefit greatly therefore from the mutual support of parents and teachers in encouraging them to learn both at home and at school. Indeed we see homework as an important way of establishing a successful dialogue between teachers and parents. One of the aims of our school is for children to develop as independent learners. We believe that homework is one of the main ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning.

Homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. 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 wide range of out-of-school clubs and organisations that play an important part in the lives of many children. We are well aware that children spend more time at home than at school, and we believe they develop their skills, interests and talents to the full only when parents encourage them to make maximum use of the experiences and opportunities that are available outside of school.

### Aims and objectives

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 a partnership 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 learning done in school and to allow children to practice skills taught in lessons;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future

### Types of homework

We set a variety of homework activities. In the Infant classes we encourage the children to read by giving them reading sacks, as well as their class reading books, to take home to read with their parents. We give guidance information to parents to help them achieve the maximum benefit from this time spent reading with their child. We also ask Infant children to learn spellings or mathematical tables as part of their homework. Sometimes we ask children to talk about a topic at home prior to studying it in school. For example, in the history topic on toys, we ask children to find out what toys were popular when their grandparents were young and, if possible, to bring examples into school to show the other children. Sometimes we ask children to find and collect things that we then use in science lessons, and occasionally we ask children to take home work that they have started in school when we believe that they would benefit from spending further time on it. When we ask children to study a topic or

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to research a particular subject, we encourage them to use the school and local library and the Internet and CD-ROMs.

From Primary 4 to 7 we continue to give children the sort of homework activities outlined in paragraph 4.1, including their Home Readers, but we expect them to do more tasks independently. We set literacy and numeracy homework routinely each week and we expect the children to consolidate and reinforce learning done in school through practice at home. We also set homework to ensure that prior learning has been understood.

### **Amount of homework**

We increase the amount of homework that we give the children as they move through the school. We expect Primary 1 to 3 children to spend approximately one hour a week doing homework, although this may well include reading with a parent. We expect children in primary 4 and 5 to spend approximately 20 minutes per night on homework and children in primary 6 and 7 to spend approximately 30 minutes per night.

We give all the children a homework diary where they or the teacher or Support for Learning/Classroom Assistant records the homework, and where parents and teachers make any relevant comments. Please ensure that the diary is looked after carefully, signed on a weekly basis, and brought to school daily.

### **Pupils with special educational needs**

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. If a child has special needs, we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way. When setting homework for pupils who have specific needs, we refer to the Child Plans, and Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

### **The 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 children as they feel necessary and 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.

We ask parents to check the home/school diary at least once a week and to sign it as requested.

If parents have any problems or 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 Head Teacher.

### **Monitoring and review**

The Homework policy is reviewed through our school development planning or to take account of pupil, parent and staff concerns. Homework diaries are monitored throughout the year by the Head Teacher.

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