

Weston Turville CE School

Mission Statement –
TO PURSUE WISDOM WITHIN A CHRISTIAN ETHOS

HOMEWORK POLICY

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Guidelines produced by	Mr G. Norris
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Homework Policy

For the purposes of this document homework is defined as, “any work or activities which pupils are asked to do outside lesson time, either on their own or with parents”.

For younger children this is likely to encompass simple games, learning spellings and number facts as well as reading, and topic-related activities. For older children more formal activities are included which require them to get in to a habit of regularly setting aside periods of time to study on their own.

Homework should:

- give children an opportunity to practise and consolidate what they have learned at school
- develop skills of working independently and taking ownership
- provide opportunities to work alongside parents
- develop an effective partnership between home and school
- extend school learning by, for example, additional reading, use of home based resources, up to date computers etc.
- develop exploration skills and child-led learning

Homework is most effective when:

- children and parents/guardians are very clear about what they need to do
- tasks are planned and structured to support progression in learning
- there is a regular programme so that everyone (teachers, parents, children) know what to expect each week
- children receive prompt clear feedback
- there is continuity, consistency and progression in the setting of homework
- policies are regularly monitored and evaluated to check that they support children’s learning in the best possible way.

At Weston Turville CE School a variety of homework is set –

- reading
- spelling
- multiplication tables
- writing
- maths
- learning log (a grid reflecting a range of tasks based on the topic being studied which children can choose from)

Recommended time allocation for home activities each week

	<u>Daily Reading</u> (7 days a week)	<u>Other home activities</u>
Reception	Up to 10 minutes <i>As appropriate</i>	<i>As appropriate</i>
Years 1 and 2	10 minutes	Spellings, plus 15 minutes number work & learning grid
Year 3	10-15 minutes	1 x 20-30 minutes, plus spellings and tables
Year 4	15 - 20 minutes	1 x 40 mins including spellings and tables
Year 5	15 - 20 minutes	2 x 30 mins including spellings and tables
Year 6	20 minutes +	1 x 30 minutes, 1 x 30 – 60 minutes, including tables and spellings

Occasional other activities may be set.

These are approximate times and most children should be able to complete set tasks within these time scales. Where children regularly take significantly longer parents should contact the class teacher to discuss the matter. Children sometimes choose to spend longer on particular tasks, and within reason, we would not wish to stop this. **Again, if this becomes a significant issue parents should discuss this with the class teacher, or put a note at the bottom of the work.**

On occasions it may be appropriate to set additional work to help a child reach a specific target. An example would be a 10-minute daily practice to improve handwriting for a given period of time. This would be in addition to the above guidelines.

Where children have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities it is sometimes appropriate to modify the allocation of homework. Their child's teacher will advise parents of this.

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Homework Guidelines for Parents

Parents should be clear about the tasks which are set and when they should be handed in. This is communicated to the child and in the class newsletters. Get in to the routine of asking your child each day. If your child regularly does not know what to do, or when it should be completed, please let the class teacher know.

Negotiate with your child a set slot for homework activities. There is no “right” time. Some children will settle to tasks as soon as they get home, others need a time to play and let off steam. A regular homework slot however will help your child to get in to good habits and can lessen the opportunities for confrontation.

Provide a suitable space in a quiet room. For reading this may be an easy chair, for written tasks a table and appropriate chair will help. As far as possible this should be away from distractions such as the television or pre school children.

Younger children should work with an adult. Older children should be encouraged to work independently. They should however, be able to tell you what task they have been set before they begin and be able to show you the finished work at the end. It is difficult to set specific ages since children’s maturity and self-discipline varies.

Avoid “teaching” your child or writing their homework out for them. It is very easy to confuse a child by using different strategies. The system you learned at their age for say, subtraction, is not necessarily the one which we use in schools today. If your child requires a great deal of assistance please put a note on the bottom of the work; junior pupils should be encouraged to ask for help from their teachers independently. For further guidance please see the school’s maths calculation policy <http://www.westonturville.bucks.sch.uk/page/?title=The+Teaching+of+Maths&pid=274>

Reading

For children of all ages reading activities should include:

- the child reading to an adult
- an adult reading to the child
- sharing in discussions about the book (illustrations, the plot, characters etc)
- if the opportunity arises, reading to younger brothers or sisters

Older children may choose to be more independent and prefer not to read to an adult. However they often enjoy being read to, and should be discussing the books they are reading/have read with adults. Typical discussion issues could cover plot, setting, characters, interesting vocabulary or language, prediction of what will happen next/at the end, the author, the genre of the book. For more details please see the reading advice on the school website -

<http://www.westonturville.bucks.sch.uk/page/?title=The+Teaching+of+Reading&pid=272>

Spelling

Current research advises that the most effective way of teaching spellings is to adopt a multi-sensory approach:

Look – look closely at the whole word, at the constituent letters or groups of letters

Say – speak the word out loud, say each group of letters, individual letters

Cover – conceal the word with your hand, a sheet of paper

Write – write the word in normal handwriting, joined up for preference after Year 2

Check – compare the original with the answer.

If correct move on, if there is an error repeat all five stages again.

If a child can complete a list of words three times using this system, they are likely to retain the correct spellings. Children have spelling logs in class which follow the same system. Sometimes children may be given the same word a second or third time because they have forgotten it or are not yet using it in their independent writing. Children may be asked to write their spellings into full sentences to show the context and meaning of the word.

Maths

The most valuable way to help your child with maths is to help them learn to chant their times tables and know random tables by heart. For older children it is also helpful for them to know the associated division facts. For example, when they know that 6×4 is 24 they need to remember that $24/6$ is 4 and $24/4$ is 6.

When your child is completing calculations within their maths homework it is helpful for you to refer to the 'Calculation Progression Grid'. This breaks down the strategies taught at school into year groups and gives examples.

If you want to help your child further do not go to W H Smiths etc and buy a textbook or workbook. Instead introduce some activities:

- spotting shapes in surroundings
- cooking – initially comparing more than, less than, lighter than, heavier than; then using weighing scales and measuring jugs
- take them shopping and get them to pay – but not with a credit card! This will allow opportunities for familiarity with coins and practice giving and receiving payments
- buy your child a watch; digital are easiest to start with, but when they break it, replace with an analogue to broaden the experience.

The best way to learn maths at home is to enjoy it; pressure may switch the children off and hamper their progress.