Homework Policy

Homework compliments the work done by pupils in school; in Auchinraith this begins in Primary 1 and continues throughout the seven years of primary school.

Purposes of Homework

Homework tasks can have many and varied aims and objectives. These include:

- offering practice and consolidation of class work
- providing opportunities for individual work
- encouraging pupils to plan, organise their time effectively and develop self-discipline
- allowing access to resources not available at school e.g. discussing historical aspects with older family members
- offering preparation for future class work
- providing information for parents
- providing opportunities for parents to work with their child at home
- creating channels for home-school communication

For staff, parents and pupils to be committed to the school's policy on homework they must be aware of its purpose and believe in its value.

The school communicates this through the school handbook and homework diaries.

It is important to remember that parents are supporting and reinforcing the curriculum through homework – teaching has already taken place within the class.
The Value of Homework

Just as school learning should be a motivating and pleasant experience, homework should be regarded by pupils as something which is meaningful, stimulating and worthwhile.

Pupils are more likely to value homework when:

- the task is at the pupils’ own level
- there is a variety and range of activities
- they know that their effort will be recognised and appropriate feedback/reward given
- its purpose is clear
- they recognise the expectations of parents and teachers
- teachers are enthusiastic about the task and its outcome
**Homework Tasks**

Homework is a major part of learning and it is important that pupils and parents understand the purpose of any homework task.

Reading, phonics / spelling activities and mathematics are regular homework tasks from Primary 1 to Primary 7 but other homework tasks can be wide and varied, focusing on many aspects of the primary school curriculum.

**Homework for Primary 1**

Homework begins in Primary 1 with pre-reading activities. Parents play an important part in the teaching of reading at this early stage. At induction meetings this role is communicated to parents.

Gradually other tasks are introduced over the course of the year. These may include:

- writing practice
- phonics / spelling activities
- number activities

**Homework for Primary 2**

The good habits established in Primary 1 continue in Primary 2 with daily reading practice.

Homework tasks may include:

- reading/phonics/spelling activities
- number work
- writing practice

**Homework for Primary 3**

Primary 3 will have reading homework daily. Other tasks may include:

- phonics / spelling activities
- spelling
- mathematics

**Homework for Primary 4**

Primary 4 will have reading homework daily. Other tasks may include:

- spelling/phonics activities
- literacy tasks
- mathematics
**Homework for Primary 5**

Primary 5 will have reading homework 3/4 times per week. Other tasks may include:

- spelling / phonic activities
- mathematics
- literacy tasks

**Homework for Primary 6/7**

As stated previously, tasks may be given on a Monday for completion later in the week.

Other tasks for children in Primary 6 and 7 may include;

- mathematics
- literacy tasks – piece of writing / spelling activities / language worksheet
- research work related to class topics when appropriate

**Variations from class to class will occur.**

**Timing**

Children already work hard in school so we must ensure that they are not overloaded by homework tasks. Any guide to the appropriate amount of homework must be flexible.

The tasks for an evening, depending on ability, should take:

- up to 15 minutes in Primaries 1
- approximately 15 minutes in Primary 2/3
- approximately 20 minutes in Primary 4/5
- approximately 25/30 minutes in Primary 6 and 7

By upper primary our children should be taking more responsibility for the organisation of their homework. Some children, by choice, will take longer on tasks, spending time decorating or illustrating a piece of work.

It should also be recognised that homework cannot be rushed if a good standard is to be achieved.

Teachers should periodically monitor the setting of homework, in order to consider:

a) how long pupils will spend on a task
b) the problems they may encounter
**Homework Record / Diaries**

In Auchinraith every pupil will use a homework diary.

These diaries have been slightly adapted for our school to include ‘Notes to pupils’ and ‘Notes to parents’.

Parents will be asked to sign each task listed in the diary to show that they have reviewed the completed task. These diaries do cost a lot of money therefore lost diaries will need to be paid for. Staff will check all diaries on a daily basis.

**Feedback**

There should be as short as possible a time gap between completion of work and feedback. Ideally homework tasks should have been reviewed and assessed by the next day at the latest. There is little point of children being issued with ‘more of the same’ when mistakes or difficulties have not been noticed or remediated. Delayed feedback gives the pupil and parent the idea that this work is not valued by the teacher.

There should always be recognition and reinforcement of effort and good work. Each teacher has his/her own method of doing this. Children can also be sent to their departmental head or the head teacher for reward and praise.

Work out of school should be formally assessed and recognised in reporting to parents and others.

**Sanctions**

Homework is considered an important part of the education of pupils at Auchinraith and teachers should establish a high expectation that homework will be done by pupils. Failure to meet that expectation is treated seriously. If this is an isolated happening pupils should be given a second opportunity, and where appropriate, the necessary support and help.

(Care should be exercised not to blame a child for non-completion of homework when the teacher suspects non-cooperation from parents or home circumstances are to blame – this should be discussed with departmental head or head teacher)

Where there is persistent failure to do homework the head of department should be fully informed. Various approaches can be employed and a whole school agreement to how this is handled is noted below.

- on the first occasion children are reminded but no action is taken
- on the second occasion the pupil is kept in at playtime
- on the third occasion the pupil is kept in and is issued with a letter for their parent/carer
- on the fourth occasion one of the SMT will contact the parent / carer and arrange a meeting to discuss the way forward.

Homework should never be used as a punishment
Homework Environment

Teachers can do very little about where, when and how children “do” their homework. Some pupils (and some parents) still tend to see homework as a solitary activity. Homework has to be seen in the context of competing attractions, such as television, computer games, younger siblings etc.

The school does give advice on homework matters to parents. This is outlined in Auchinraith’s ‘Homework Policy for Parents’ and in the homework flier that is distributed to parents / carers on a yearly basis. Each family has been issued with the updated guidelines. These also appear in the School Handbook and will be issued to any new parent.

The school policy and parents’ policy will be reviewed as and when required.

In Conclusion

Homework strengthens the partnership between home and school and subsequently aids the overall educational attainment of the child.
HOMEWORK POLICY FOR PARENTS

Homework compliments the work done by pupils in school. In Auchinraith this begins in primary 1 and continues throughout the seven years of primary school.

In Auchinraith we want to make homework a pleasant and enjoyable experience.

Purposes of Homework
Homework tasks can have many and varied aims and objectives. These include:
- allowing practice and consolidation of work
- providing opportunities for individual work
- providing information for parents
- providing opportunities for parents to work with their child at home
- creating channels for home–school communication

Homework Tasks
Reading, phonics / spelling activities and mathematics are regular homework tasks from Primary 1 to Primary 7 but other homework tasks can be wide and varied, focusing on many aspects of the primary school curriculum.

Homework for Primary 1
Homework begins in primary 1 with pre-reading activities. Parents play an important part in the teaching of reading at this early stage. At induction meetings this role is communicated to parents.

Gradually other tasks are introduced over the course of the year. These may include:

- writing practice
- phonics
- number worksheets
- collecting items/information for class topics
Homework for Primary 2
The good habits established in Primary 1 continue in Primary 2 with daily reading practice. Homework tasks may include:

- reading/phonic practice
- number work

Homework for Primary 3
Primary 3 will have reading homework 3/4 times per week. Other tasks may include:

- phonic practice for some children
- spelling (this will probably be introduced during the session)
- mathematics

Homework for Primary 4
Primary 4 will have reading homework 3/4 times per week. Other tasks may include:

- spelling/phonic activities
- language tasks
- mathematics

Homework for Primary 5
Primary 5 will have reading homework 3/4 times per week. Other tasks may include:

- spelling activities
- mathematics
- language worksheets

Homework for Primary 6/7
Other tasks for children in Primary 6 and 7 may include:

- mathematics
- language tasks – piece of writing / spelling activities / language worksheet
- research work related to class topics

Variations from class to class will occur.
Time Allocation

Children work hard when they are in school and we try not to overload them with homework tasks.

The tasks for an evening should take:

- up to 5-10 minutes in Primaries 1
- approximately 10 minutes in Primary 2/3
- approximately 15 minutes in Primary 4/5
- approximately 20/25 minutes in Primary 6 and 7

By upper primary our children should be taking more responsibility for the organisation of their homework.

Some children, by choice, will take longer on tasks, spending time decorating or illustrating a piece of work.

Role of Parents

Homework gives parents the chance to find out about their child’s class work and to become involved in this process.

You can help make the homework more successful by:

- Making sure you know exactly what homework your child has been given by looking at the homework diary every night
- Making the time you work with your child a pleasant, shared experience
- Making the atmosphere supportive. (*We realise that this may call for great patience on your part!*)
- Signing the diary (*Alongside each task listed*)
- Choosing a suitable time for homework completion
- Choosing a suitable place with an atmosphere of peace and quiet
- Supporting your child in the task but allowing him/her to complete it independently as far as they can
- Contacting the school if you need advice or have any concerns
- Using the homework diary as a means of communication between home and school (*Please feel free to write in the diary*)

Work tasks to cover absence from school are not regarded as homework but will be given where possible.

Please contact class teacher, Head of Department or Head Teacher.

The school greatly appreciates your help, support and time spent in this way.