

West Linton Primary School

Homework Policy

The school policy for homework was developed in partnership with the Parent Council and following consultation with staff, pupils and parents of West Linton Primary School.

Why is homework important?

“Parents, carers and other family members can and do make a real difference to children’s education. When parents and schools work together children do better. Children learn a great deal at pre-school and school and you can add to that learning by supporting them at home. For example, showing an interest in their homework and talking to them about it really helps them to learn. With support and encouragement children find it easier to get into the homework habit.”

Homework helps your child to:

- *learn how to organise and manage their time*
- *take more responsibility for their own learning*
- *practise and build on what they have learned at school*
- *develop confidence to deal with frustrations, overcome difficulties and solve problems*
- *learn and work independently in the future*

(‘Making the difference: Homework’ Parentzone, Scottish Executive)

Aims

The policy acknowledges the range of views expressed by stakeholders and aims to:

- Provide opportunities for pupils and their parents to share and enjoy learning experiences, thus strengthening partnerships in relation to children’s learning.
- Encourage children to develop within the 4 capacities of Curriculum for Excellence: as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.
- Extend learning beyond the classroom environment in order to continue to raise attainment & achievement.
- Provide opportunity to practise or consolidate basic skills and knowledge, especially in Literacy and Numeracy.
- Reinforce work covered in class by providing further opportunities for individual learning, making use where appropriate, of Information Communication Technology.
- Ensure that pupils are clear about success criteria for the homework task and that parents have an understanding of what it is their child is expected to do.
- Encourage pupils to develop the skills required to study independently, increasing their responsibility as they progress throughout the school in preparation for Primary 7 pupils’ transition to secondary school.
- Ensure consistency of approach throughout the school.

The Expectations and Nature of Homework

“It’s quality that matters, not quantity – the kind of homework your child does is often more important than the amount.”

(‘Making the difference: Homework’ Parentzone, Scottish Executive)

Homework will be given to all pupils beginning in Primary 1 through to Primary 7. The type of homework set will be varied and will change as pupils move through the school. We believe that pupils should increasingly take responsibility for their own independent learning and be prepared for the greater demands of secondary school.

The homework given will be set in the context of a Curriculum for Excellence and will take many forms.

1 Practice of Skills Homework will give pupils extra practice in skills they have learned at school, e.g. reading, spelling, number facts, tables, handwriting.

2 New Work Sometimes pupils will be asked to prepare a piece of new work at home. This could be related to any area of the curriculum but often to Social Studies or Language & Literacy.

3 Collecting Information Sometimes pupils will be asked to research information from the news, books, internet or from members of their family.

4 Catching Up Pupils may be asked to complete a page or section of work to ensure progression within a group. Pupils who have been absent or who have not applied themselves to a task in class may be asked to complete work at home.

5 Instrumental Practice Pupils who receive instrumental instruction are expected to undertake daily practice.

The following outlines approximate times to be allowed for homework at each stage, remembering it can only be taken as a guide as children work at different rates.

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>Primary 1 & 2</i> | <i>10-15 minutes per night</i> |
| <i>Primary 3, 4 & 5</i> | <i>15 – 20 minutes per night</i> |
| <i>Primary 6 & 7</i> | <i>25 – 30 minutes per night</i> |

Where a homework task requires significantly more time to complete, it will be set over a number of nights or weeks.

Examples of Homework Tasks

Homework may be given in any of the curricular areas. The following outlines some of the homework tasks pupils may be set. In addition to regular homework tasks such as reading, spelling and learning of number facts or multiplication tables, pupils may be required to undertake other occasional homework activities to support work in class.

Languages and Literacy:

reading and comprehension, writing, learning of letters and words and other literacy activities, spelling, preparation of a short talk.

Mathematics and Numeracy:

learning of number facts or multiplication tables, mental agility, problem solving, written sums, playing a number game, measuring task.

Social Studies & Sciences:

completing a quiz or a questionnaire, research task, collecting for a display, investigation, observation task

Technologies:

investigation, simple construction or experiment, written question, interview

Expressive Arts:

planning a piece of work such as a picture or drama activity.

Health and Wellbeing:

interview, record keeping, practical challenge, written task

Religious and Moral Education:

writing a report, answering questions, listing reasons.

Information and Communication Technology

where appropriate, use of ICT to support home learning in any of the above curricular areas.

Responsibilities

Parents, pupils and teachers should have a common understanding of how and when homework is allocated and where their responsibilities lie.

The School should

- Provide meaningful homework tasks and appropriate activities to support work in class.
- Ensure pupils have clear understanding of what they are being asked to do.
- Discuss pupils' homework with them including what they need to do to meet, and how well they have met, success criteria.
- Create an atmosphere in which pupils appreciate the relevance of homework.
- Encourage pupils to take a pride in the content and presentation of homework tasks.
- Consider the needs of the individual pupil by setting homework appropriate to their capabilities.
- Ensure homework requires only the use of those resources which are readily available to pupils.
- Recognise and praise homework tasks well done.

Parents should

- Support their children by helping to create the circumstances and the facilities for doing homework.
- Check each night what homework has to be done.
- Discuss, take an interest in and encourage their child to fulfil homework tasks to a satisfactory standard.
- Encourage their children and talk to them about their homework – “children learn something well when they talk about it or explain it to someone else, so asking your child about their homework really helps them”.

- Listen to children's reading, discuss and question children about what they are reading, and help with tasks such as the learning of letters, words, spelling and multiplication tables. Continue this as the child progresses through the school as this form of support is as important in upper stages as at early stages.
- As children progress through school encourage them to become more independent in to carrying out research tasks, managing their time, making deductions and presenting their work.
- Look at their children's written homework and check that it has been presented carefully and neatly.
- Sign completed homework to indicate they are satisfied with the child's efforts. (Parents are requested not to correct errors in the homework, as this masks any difficulties that their child may be having and it is important that class teachers are aware of any difficulties in order that they can provide appropriate support.)
- Encourage their child to take responsibility to hand in completed homework tasks on time.
- Inform the class teach if any aspect of homework is causing concern or difficulties.

Pupils should

- Ensure that they clearly understand what is expected in relation to their homework tasks before they leave school.
- Regularly discuss their homework with parents and teachers.
- Develop good habits and self-discipline about homework, ensuring regular time to complete homework tasks and that homework is returned on time.
- Ensure homework tasks are completed to the best of their ability.
- Look after their homework books and materials

What happens if pupils do not complete / return homework tasks?

Occasionally a child is unable to complete their homework because of illness or a family crisis. This is acceptable but, if possible, parents are asked to send a message explaining it.

In other circumstances, children who do not complete their homework will be given a further opportunity to do so - either by taking it home again the following night or by staying in at break time or lunch time to do it.

If this happens on a number of occasions then parents will be alerted to the problem.

Absence

In the case of illness, homework tasks will not be set until after the child has returned to school as generally pupils too unwell to attend school do not feel well enough to complete school work. Exceptions may be made in some circumstances if, for example, there is an extended period of absence.

Homework will not be set for children in the case of absence because of a family holiday. In such circumstances it is suggested that children write a diary account of their holiday and read some books of their own choosing while away.

In both situations teachers will save work missed while children have been absent, for them to complete on their return. It is possible that some of these tasks may be sent home as homework,
WLPS Reviewed & Updated Session 2013/2014

possibly spread over several nights. Because of the nature of other tasks or the necessary teaching involved in them however, time will have to be made for their completion in school.

Conclusion

In partnership with parents, West Linton Primary School will strive towards creating and maintaining a positive homework climate. Teachers and parents will encourage and praise pupils for the correct completion - recognising the efforts of individuals - and prompt return of homework tasks. Homework will be used to enhance pupils' learning experiences and to provide opportunities for pupils to develop skills and work habits essential to lifelong learning.

The following information for parents is included in our School Handbook & reiterated in September of each school year:

Although we appreciate there are many different views on homework, we believe it is important that parents support the school and help children to set aside time to do homework. It is a discipline which requires children to organise their time to best advantage and should be encouraged. The amount of homework given varies from class to class and from week to week but is given on a regular basis and for a variety of purposes. Individual class teachers will provide more specific information.

In the infant classes it begins with reading at home along with initial sounds and phonics work. Eventually simple spelling or simple fact-finding may also be included. Older children may be asked to read a chapter from a novel in preparation for a discussion in class, research information for topic work or do a mathematics exercise.

Children may be asked to complete a piece of work which has not been finished in class when the class teacher feels sufficient time for this has been given.

Homework may be reinforcement of work already taught or a finding out activity. Children in P6 & P7 will be given an increasing amount of homework to help them to develop the study skills necessary when they reach High School. If you have any concerns about homework please contact us.

We suggest the following time should be allowed for homework remembering it can only be taken as a guide because children work at different rates.

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>Primary 1 & 2</i> | <i>10-15 minutes per night</i> |
| <i>Primary 3, 4 & 5</i> | <i>15 – 20 minutes per night</i> |
| <i>Primary 6 & 7</i> | <i>25 – 30 minutes per night</i> |

*We request that you sign homework as this lets the teacher see that the homework has been supervised and that you are satisfied with the effort your child has made. **It is important that homework is carefully done and well presented.** However, if your child has difficulty with a task it is important that the teacher is aware of this and for this reason we ask that you do not correct work.*

You can find more information about homework, or any aspect of Scottish education, on "Parentzone".
www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk

WLPS Aug 2011