

Homework Policy

Introduction

Vision

Firs Farm Primary's vision is to inspire each child to achieve their full potential to the highest possible standards in an inclusive and vibrant learning environment where they feel safe, are respected by all and encouraged to be responsible and valued members of the community.

Aims

Firs Farm Primary aims to create a safe atmosphere where:

There is Quality Education for all children in partnership with parents, guardians, governors and the community

Excellent teaching staff hold the key to good practice

Children will learn to work together effectively, include others and make friends

Literacy, Numeracy Science & Information Technology are of paramount importance

All will be treated as equals

All will be encouraged towards independence

Homework is anything that children do outside the normal school day that contributes to their learning in response to guidance from the school. Homework encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents to support children's learning. For example, a parent who spends time reading a story to their child before bedtime is helping with homework.

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

- to enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development;

- to help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner as they progress in school;
- to promote a partnership between home and school in supporting each child's learning;
- to consolidate and reinforce learning done in school and to allow children to practice skills taught in lessons & research future topics;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future.

Types of homework

We set a variety of homework activities.

Foundation & Infants

In the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 we encourage the children to read by giving them 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 Key Stage 1 children to learn:

- Spellings as part of their homework & letter sounds (phonics)
- Weekly Maths
- 2 Reading Books per week – 1 scheme & 1 choice.
- 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.
- Find and collect things that we then use in science lessons,
- Occasionally we ask children to take homework 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 to research a particular subject, we encourage them to use the school and local library and the Internet (incorporating our e safety policy) and CD-ROMs.
- We encourage families to take trips to places of interest such as parks & museums and promote after school activities such as Music and Sport alongside Homework.
- From Y1 we join in a "Firs Farm challenge" – additional voluntary holiday project

At Key Stage 2 (Junior classes) 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 Work is recorded using the Homework Diary.
- Spellings are set weekly and results recorded in the children's Homework Diary
- We also set homework as a means of helping the children to revise for examinations as well as to ensure that prior learning has been understood.
- We set a termly set a "Firs Farm challenge as extension work" this is usually a school wide topic but can be specific to a year group.
- Y3 take home folders & Y4-6 retain work in folders in school – parents may review this at any time.

Amount of homework

We increase the amount of homework that we give the children as they move through the school. At Firs Farm homework is set weekly and families can then have the flexibility as to when to complete it. We expect Key Stage 1 children to spend approximately one hour a week doing

homework, although this may well include reading with a parent. We expect children in Years 3 and 4 to spend approximately 15–20 minutes per night on homework and children in Years 5 and 6 to spend approximately 30 minutes per night. This is in line with the government guidelines. If the activity is taking too long, please write a note on the work and speak to the class teacher.

Marking

At Firs Farm homework is set weekly and families can then have the flexibility as to when to complete it. It is marked by staff at school with a comment or ticked and filed for parents to view (it is returned home for Reception to Y3 & kept in school for Y4-6 although parents can request to see it anytime)

Guidelines for amount

Reception

Reading 10 minutes per night- leading up to 2 reading books weekly
Weekly books about the sound of the week
Maths activity weekly
Word Walls ongoing
Home Wow books (a shared experiences folder of work)

Year 1

Reading 15 minutes per night 2 reading books weekly
Spellings - weekly
More challenging & longer Literacy & Maths tasks on alternate weeks
Handwriting where necessary
Occasional topic based homework

Year 2

Reading 15 minutes per night 2 reading bks weekly
Spellings - weekly
Literacy & Maths weekly or occasional topic based activity
Handwriting where necessary
Times table (2, 5, 10) practised weekly

Year 3

Reading 15 minutes per night
Spellings – weekly
Literacy & Maths weekly or occasional topic based activity
Handwriting when necessary
Times Table (2, 5, 10, 3, 4, 6, 8) practised weekly

Year 4

Reading 20 minutes per night

Spellings – weekly

Literacy & Maths weekly or occasional topic based activity

Handwriting when necessary

All Times tables should be practised weekly

Year 5

Reading 20 minutes per night minimum

(It is recognised that at this stage many children will be reading extended texts for pleasure over longer periods)

Spellings – weekly

Literacy & Maths weekly or occasional topic based activity

All Times tables should be practised weekly

Handwriting when necessary

Additional work may be set for children receiving extra help in their learning

Year 6

Reading 20 minutes per night minimum (It is recognised that this stage many children will be reading extended texts for pleasure over longer periods)

Spellings – weekly

Literacy & Maths weekly or occasional topic based activity

All Times tables should be practised weekly

Handwriting when necessary

Additional work set over the term related to their learning, including exam practice

Additional work may be set for children in unit times

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 to pupils who are named on the register of special needs, we refer to their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Additional Reading clubs

Individuals for additional Reading support /homework will be supported throughout reading clubs.

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 weekly 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. Finally, if they are not happy and wish to make a complaint about the school homework policy or the way it is implemented; parents should contact the class teacher in the first instance, the school management team and finally if they are still not happy, the Chair of Governors via the school Office.

All homework is ticked as minimum, filed in homework folders and kept for Open evenings- it is not usually marked in class. Parents will be informed of procedures through curriculum letters. Good work is celebrated & children not completing homework will be asked to attend a meeting at school with their families to establish an improved system.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to agree and then monitor the school homework policy. The committee of the governing body that deals with curriculum issues does this. Parents complete a questionnaire during the school's OFSTED inspection, and our governing body pays careful consideration to any concern that is raised at that time, or in between OFSTED inspections, by any parent. Our governing body may, at any time, request from our Headteacher a report on the way homework is organised in our school.