

# Homework

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## 1 Policy Statement

At Ewell Castle School we believe that carefully structured homework tasks are a valuable extension of work undertaken in class, which both ensures and improves the depth of pupils' understanding, as well as aiding their retention and revision. We additionally believe that tasks completed independently in the quiet and private conditions of the home can nurture deep-thought, creativity and a life-long appreciation for learning, as well as providing vital preparation for later life. As such we set homework in line with this policy regularly across all Year Groups in the school (including the Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS)).

Among the benefits of setting homework in this way:

- It develops the pupil's ability to work independently.
- It develops the pupil's ability to work to deadlines.
- It reinforces work accomplished in the classroom and/or prepares for future work.
- It provides the conditions needed for creative and thoughtful work of all kinds.
- It allows pupils to practise skills learned in the classroom.
- It allows pupils to use materials and other sources of information that are not always available in the classroom.
- It can involve parents and others in the pupil's work for their mutual benefit.
- It allows pupils the opportunity to complete unfinished work / further explore work they have found interesting.
- It facilitates the opportunity for long term research, project-based work and the completion of lengthier / more sustained pieces of work.
- It can help pupils to make more rapid progress in learning.
- It forms a link with the methods of study/work crucial to success in the latter stages of education, as well as the world of work.

## 2 Homework at the Preparatory School

### 2.1 The Nature of Homework

Homework is set by class teacher and by subject teachers where relevant. The nature of the homework will vary between year groups, different classes and subjects of study. Marking homework forms an integral part of our assessment. On a Wednesday we have a 'Homework free zone' where pupils can choose to read or spend time with their family.

### 2.2 Homework in General

#### **Nursery:**

Initial phonics work (Read Write Inc.) is taken home daily from the end of the child's first half term.

#### **Reception:**

Pupils are expected to read at home and/or practise key words or sounds with their family for 15 minutes each day. One piece of homework is given to pupils weekly, each Friday, this will be relevant to their learning from the week.

#### **Years 1 and 2:**

Pupils are expected to read at home and/or practise key words or sounds with their family for 15 minutes each day.

Reading books are chosen by their teacher from the relevant reading scheme according to the pupil's level. A list of spellings is given once a week. Mental Maths exercises and Maths Whizz are set each week, tasks should take up to 20 minutes to complete.

### **Years 3-6:**

All pupils from Year 3 upwards are given homework as follows:

Pupils are expected to read at home either independently or with their family each day. A list of spellings is given once a week. Mental maths, Maths Whizz and grammar exercises are set by subject teachers weekly. In addition pupils may be set occasional science, topic or languages homework where appropriate.

### **2.3 Time to be spent on Homework**

The following suggests the expected amount of time a pupil should spend on each aspect of their homework.

**Years 1 and 2** 15 minutes reading and spellings daily. 20 minutes each of Maths Whizz and mental maths weekly.

**Years 3 and 4** 20 minutes reading and spellings daily. 30 minutes each of Maths Whizz, mental maths and grammar weekly.

**Years 5 and 6** 20 minutes reading and spellings daily. 45 minutes of Maths Whizz, 20 minutes on mental maths, 30 minutes science and 30-40 minutes of grammar weekly.

### **2.4 Organisation of Homework**

Pupil's in Years 3-6 are given a homework diary at the beginning of the year, which will include information as to when homework will be set. Homework is normally due in the day after it is set.

The homework for each day is written in the homework diary by the pupil and checked by the teacher who set the work. The homework diary is also used for teachers and parents to pass informal notes to each other regarding homework and/or minor administrative matters. A homework timetable is included in the pupil handbook.

We aim to mark or respond to homework regularly, and in a way that is helpful to pupils in line with our Marking Policy.

#### **Parents are requested to:**

- (a) Check that homework details are filled in clearly and regularly in the homework diary.
- (b) Help the pupils to organise time to the best advantage so that things are not left to the last minute.
- (c) Provide a suitable working environment for pupils to complete their homework.
- (d) Inform the teacher if there are any homework issues arising.

### **2.5 Blue Octopus homework**

All pupils are set a Blue Octopus homework twice a year. The Blue Octopus homework will be an opportunity for pupils to investigate a topic for example: 'Space' or 'Underground'. Pupils can complete the project work in a way that interests them. This can include, drawing, writing, photographs, film, presentation etc.

### **3 Homework at the Senior School**

#### **3.1 The Nature of Homework**

Most departments set one or two pieces of homework per week for each class depending on the subject and the level of study. The nature of the homework will vary between year groups, different classes and topics of study. Homework is often not set for school holidays to allow pupils to enjoy their family time and pursue other interests outside of the school curriculum, although it can and will be set if deemed appropriate and beneficial; necessarily such homework increases as a pupils progresses towards GCSE and A Level study. Marking homework forms an integral part of our assessment. Homework is marked and returned to pupils as soon as possible.

#### **3.2 Homework in General**

Homework tasks vary depending on the subject and the stage of study but may include, amongst other things, the following:

- Written work (essays or shorter answers)
- Computer-based work (on MyMaths or similar)
- Research
- Pre-learning
- Revision
- Practical work, such as posters or art work.
- Project work (perhaps over a number of weeks)
- Past paper examination questions

Tasks should be appropriate to the ability level and age of the pupil.

#### **3.3 Time to be spent on Homework**

The following suggests the average/expected amount of time a pupil should spend on their homework each evening for Years 7-11 and the Sixth Form.

**Year 7** – usually 3 pieces of homework per night, each of 25 minutes

**Year 8** – usually 3 pieces of homework per night, each of 30 minutes

**Year 9** – usually 3 pieces of homework per night, each of 35 minutes

**Years 10 and 11** – usually 3 pieces of homework per night, each of 40 minutes

**Sixth Form** – all Sixth Form students are expected to carry out approximately 5 hours of additional study per subject per week. Although part of this time will be taken up with set homework, private study is also essential.

#### **3.4 Organisation of Homework / Satchel:1**

Each pupil is given a Pupil Handbook and Diary at the beginning of the year. This will contain their homework timetable, so that expectations of when homework will be set are clear from the outset.

The pupil Handbook and Diary is not used for the purposes of noting down homework set; for this the school uses Satchel:1 (previously known as Show my Homework).

Satchel:1 is an online tool to help pupils and parents keep track of homework tasks. The benefits include:

- 24/7 access with no need for usernames or passwords
- The ability to view quality and quantity of homework set
- A Free app available for iPhone, iPad, iPod Touch, and Android devices
- Receiving automated notifications before homework is due

Anybody can access the whole school homework calendar through the Satchel:1 link on the school website. Pupils can access the homework particular to them using their normal school username and password. Parents are provided with a PIN, which enables them to create up to five personal accounts, ready-linked to their child's personal homework calendar. Parents and Pupils can download the Show My Homework app to their phone or tablet to enable immediate access to homework, as well as automated notifications, if they so wish.

When individual teachers set homework on Satchel:1, they will state clearly the date the homework is set and due, as well as the expected completion time. Teachers will also ensure that written instructions are clear. Any required worksheets or similar resources will often still be given out in class, although these can also be attached to homework tasks within Show My Homework, as can links to further relevant material(s) on the internet.

Teachers aim to mark or respond to homework regularly and in a way that is helpful to pupils (in line with Senior School Marking (including Grades and Reports Policy)).

There will be constructive feedback both orally and in writing to assist pupil learning.

### **3.5 Helping with your Child's Homework**

- As above, parents can oversee the tasks set on Satchel:1.
- Help your child organise his or her time to best advantage so that things are not all left to the last minute or even forgotten.
- Try to make sure that there are suitable working conditions at home.
- Take a positive and active interest in your child's work at home rather than just insisting that it is done.
- Let us know if there are problems with homework that you cannot resolve. Perhaps your child seems to be doing too much or not enough, or is finding homework too easy or too difficult. Contact the class teacher in the first instance; they will be glad to help.

### **3.6 Failure to Hand in Homework**

We expect homework to be completed and handed in on time. This gives pupils valuable experience of working to deadlines and facilitates staff with their marking schedules. If homework is not given in appropriate action is taken:

- the class teacher will have a discussion with the pupil to find out if there are good reasons for the failure to hand in the work;
- the class teacher may contact the parents;
- a homework detention of thirty minutes will be issued on the day that the deadline was missed. Failure to attend a homework detention will result in a further sanction;

- repeated failure to complete homework to a satisfactory standard will also result in a further sanction.
- a record will be kept by each member of staff of any occasion where homework was submitted late for assessment.

## **4 Review and Development**

### **4.1 Procedure**

This document, together with the effectiveness of its procedures, will be reviewed annually by the Senior Management Team and as events or legislation change requires.

### **4.2. Links with other policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

Behaviour for Learning (Senior)  
Curriculum Policy (Whole School)  
Marking Policy (Prep)  
Marking Policy including Grades and Reporting (Senior)  
Pupils' Code of Conduct