

WOODFALL PRIMARY SCHOOL



Homework: the who, where, what, when and why *a parents' guide*

Woodfall Primary School has a Homework Policy which follows guidelines published by the Department for Education and Skills.

This guide is intended to increase your awareness of the intentions behind our policy by answering the five questions *who, where, what, when and why?* We hope you find it helpful.

WHO?

We set homework for all our children which may involve them working on their own or with parents/carers. Whilst we would hope adults would be on hand to help and encourage, please resist the temptation to do it for them! If your child needs adult help for a particular task, please make a comment on the homework so that we can address the problem in school. Please do not mark or correct your child's work or the teacher may not become aware of difficulties your child may have. Activities such as reading, mental maths, learning spellings and tables etc. naturally require the involvement of parents or others.

WHERE?

At home seems to be the obvious answer, although children who spend time after school at Out of School Club or with a child-minder etc. may be able to do at least some of their homework during this period. Homework isn't for doing in school, and children who have not done it at home will probably not do it at all, although a teacher may sometimes insist on homework being 'caught up with' at playtime. Homework needs a quiet atmosphere to be done well and written work is best completed at a desk, table or other suitable surface. Distractions should be kept to a minimum.

WHAT?

"In the primary phase, the main focus of home activities should be on literacy and numeracy, with science and other subjects being added as children move up the school. Children should either read to their parents, or listen to them reading, for between 10 to 20 minutes each day. In addition to these regular tasks, older children should be given homework which requires them to find out information, prepare for oral presentations and undertake written assignments."

DfEE (1998)

At Woodfall we have established a regular pattern of homework for each year group so that parents and children can know what to expect each day. Activities will normally include: reading (to parent and/or self), learning spellings and times tables, maths, English, work associated with topics in other subjects.

These may vary according to the needs of individual children or groups and class activities at any given time. During the Spring Term in Y6, regular homework will be replaced by revision activities for National Curriculum tests. Children will not be given homework to do during school holidays, although spellings and tables may be set at these times.

Individual tasks will vary and will be related to the work your child is currently undertaking at school. Homework is for practice rather than initial learning - it should always be something your child is *able* to do.

WHEN?

Most homework should be completed on the evening of the day on which it is given, although sometimes a teacher may set a task to be carried out over several sessions. At foundation and Key Stage 1, work is given over the weekend. 'Sooner rather than later' should be the rule, as, generally speaking, the later it gets, the more tired children become and the more of a chore homework seems to be. It is also a good idea to get homework 'out of the way' before Cubs, Brownies or other evening activities as, once again, it seems so much harder afterwards. Having a regular homework time each day is effective as it establishes a habit.

WHY?

Our school Homework Policy draws from the DfEE publication *Homework: Guidelines for Primary and Secondary Schools* (1998). The aims and purpose are stated below:

- to develop an effective partnership between home and school
- to encourage pupils to develop the skills, confidence and motivation to study effectively on their own
- to consolidate and reinforce the skills and understanding developed at school (particularly literacy and numeracy in the primary phase)
- to extend school learning, for example through additional reading
- to develop and sustain the involvement of parents in the management of pupils' learning, and keep them informed about the work children are doing
- to exploit resources for learning, of all types, at home

Homework - Some Questions Answered

What if my child doesn't finish in the stated time?

These times are for guidance only. If you feel your child has made a fair effort but has not finished the work set, by all means allow your child to stop before frustration sets in.

Should I mark/correct my child's work?

No. Most homework is for consolidation of what your child has already learned - we need to know if they cannot do it so that we can help them.

How are home-school links monitored?

Your child's teacher will keep a record of all homework. Reading record books (especially for younger children) will be maintained.

What about other/family activities?

We recognise that there may be various reasons why your child may not be able to complete homework on any given night. If this should occur, please provide a brief note of explanation.

Homework

Reception	Learning sounds and words, reading, maths activities as appropriate
Year 1	Reading, weekend maths or literacy/topic activity
Year 2	Reading, weekend maths and literacy/topic activity
Year 3	Reading, spellings, tables (each night) 1X maths per week
Year 4	Reading, spellings, tables (each night) 1X maths per week
Year 5	Reading, spellings, tables (each night) 2 X maths per week 1X literacy/topic activity per week
Year 6	Reading, spellings, tables (each night) 1X mental maths 1X other maths 1X literacy/topic activity per week