

Eridge House

Homework Policy

Introduction

The Government White Paper *Excellence in schools (DfEE 1997)* stated 'Homework is not an optional extra, but essential part of good education'. In September 1998, national guidelines were introduced advising schools and parents of the amount and type of homework deemed appropriate for pupils of different ages and abilities. More recently, as part of the Curriculum 2000 review, research has shown that schools that give their pupils homework perform significantly better in end of Key Stage assessments (QCA 1999, 2002).

At Eridge House we recognise that homework is an integral part of a pupil's learning and an important link between home and school. For these reasons, homework will be set throughout the school, from half way through Reception to Year 6, although naturally the nature of tasks and the time spent on them vary considerably depending on the age and experience of the pupil. We define homework as any '*work or task*' that a pupil is set at school to do at home, whether formal or informal, and consider it to be an important part of every pupil's learning.

In the Reception class, informal homework tasks such as reading will be set as soon as appropriate for each pupil and parents are encouraged to work with their children and support them in these tasks. More informal homework is introduced gradually until Yr 2, when the emphasis changes to include more formal tasks, in preparation for KS2. In KS2, pupils continue to be set reading and learning homework and are also given Mathematics and English tasks linked to work covered in school.

Our approach to homework varies for different year groups as well as for individual pupils, however the one thing that remains constant is that pupils will benefit most when teachers and parents work together to help children achieve. We recommend that homework should be completed 15 minutes after getting home from school after a snack and a drink. Many studies have shown that homework completed straight after school results in better learning.

Aims

This policy aims to set out flexible guidelines for the types of homework appropriate at each stage of a pupil's education. It aims to establish a consistent and progressive plan for homework tasks throughout the school, whilst acknowledging that individual class teachers will need the flexibility to adapt it for particular pupils. It endorses the importance of a partnership between home and school right from the beginning of a pupil's school career and recognises that parents and teachers must work together to ensure that each pupil has the best possible learning opportunities.

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Eridge House

It has been produced by the Headteacher and discussed and agreed with the teaching staff in Summer 2007. It will be reviewed and updated yearly.

Our main aims in giving homework are:

- To encourage good work habits from an early age
- To allow time outside the classroom for consolidation and revision
- To involve parents in their children's learning
- To maintain partnership between home and school
- To extend pupils' learning outside the school environment
- To encourage pupils to organise their work independently and prepare them gradually for the demands of secondary school.

At Eridge House, we aim to provide the best possible start for each pupil's education. Close links and continuity of support between home and school can only benefit them and us in this aim. By establishing a more 'formal' homework policy and sharing it with parents throughout the school, it is hoped that a greater understanding will be gained of how parents and teachers can work together to support pupil's learning.

Reception (EYFS) and KS1 (Lower school)

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception), our policy is to send home a reading book as soon as it is appropriate for each pupil and to set daily reading for homework. Each child will have a Reading Record book.

Appropriate homework reflecting the week's tasks may be given in the Autumn term. However, in Reception, it is the class teacher's decision as to whether the class are able to cope with a small amount of homework during the Autumn term. In Reception homework will commence officially in the spring term.

Homework is given in a folder weekly. Children are given flexibility to complete homework when they have free time during the week. Homework must be handed in to the form teacher on the designated day so that the teacher can mark and replenish homework for the following week. If homework is not handed in on the correct day it may not be marked until the next week.

Each pupil in Reception and KS1 has a book bag to carry their homework to and from school and also a Reading Record Book and message book. A pupil's Reading Record book will develop into a record of all the books they have read from the reading scheme and plot their progress throughout the year.

Parents are encouraged to listen to reading daily and record this in the reading Record book. It is important for young children to read and enjoy their books, with plenty of discussion about the pictures and the story, so that reading is established as a pleasurable activity. The Reading Record book should be used to keep a regular record and comments made should be of encouragement when appropriate. If parents have any concerns they should write it in the message book or see the teacher rather than writing in the Reading Record.

Eridge House

Reading Record books may be covered to make them fun and special to the child.

Y1 and Y2 children are given three pieces of homework that may be completed throughout the week. These consist of Mathematics, English and Topic work sheets that are no more than 10 minutes per sheet. This obviously depends on the speed in which a child works, however, homework should not be a chore or become an issue within the household. If homework is difficult for a particular child and their family it should be kept to a minimum.

In Year 2 parents are asked to continue their support by encouraging good homework habits and helping their children find a time when their homework can be completed without distractions. Parents should encourage their child to be more independent when doing their homework, with the emphasis on supporting rather than helping.

In summary:

Reception	daily Reading, Handwriting, Phonics and Maths activities
Year 1	daily Reading, Spelling, weekly Maths and Topic work
Year 2	daily Reading, English, weekly Maths and Topic work

KS2 (Upper school)

In KS2, our policy is to set more formal homework tasks on specific nights. The number and length of these homework tasks builds up gradually towards the end of Year 6 and although pupils are generally only set one homework task per night, the time they are expected to spend completing it increases accordingly. Homework may also be in the form of a mini project that will be spread across a few evenings. Years 5 and 6 are trailing a weekly homework task this term to give children more independence ready for secondary schooling.

Years 3, 4,

At the beginning of the year pupils are provided with a Homework Diary to help organise their homework. This diary should be brought to school every day and taken home every evening. Parents are asked to support the school by encouraging their child to use their Homework Diary properly, checking every evening that homework tasks have been completed and initialling the diary to confirm this. If a child has experienced problems with their homework or there is a genuine reason why they have not completed their homework, parents are asked to write a note to the teacher. Children have a homework A4 exercise book that homework is to be completed in and given in to be marked.

In summary:

Year 3	Weekly spelling and times tables English, Maths and Science/History/Geography – approx. 15-20 minutes each day
Year 4	Weekly spelling and times tables

Eridge House

English, Maths, Science/History/Geography – approx. 20-30 minutes each day

Year 5 and 6 Weekly spellings and times tables

English, Maths and Science/History/Geography – approx 45 minutes each day

Years 5 and 6

Years 5 and 6 receive homework on a Friday and return it on a Thursday. Homework is supporting the 11 plus entrance examination and Mock exams that have been sat on Fridays and sent home at the weekends. Children have a homework A4 exercise book that homework is to be completed in and given in to be marked.

Organisation

If homework is not completed satisfactorily without good reason, the teacher concerned will note this in the pupil's message book or homework diary and arrange a suitable time for the homework to be repeated.

If homework is regularly not completed satisfactorily, the form teacher will contact the pupil's parents and future homework will be closely monitored through the Homework Diary.

Holiday homework or extra work

No formal holiday homework is set in year 2 or below, although we hope that all pupils will continue to read during the school holidays.

General

If a pupil is absent from school because of illness, we generally do not send work home on the assumption that they are not well enough to do school work. Parents are asked to contact the school once their child is feeling better, to find out if there is any work that needs to be caught up on.

If parents choose to take their child out of school for extra holidays, homework will not be given to cover the time missed.

Important information for all staff

Homework reflects your teaching skills and what has been done in the classroom. Homework MUST be meaningful and purposeful. It shows how organised you are and the way you mark work is reflected in the homework. Please ensure you give grid paper, blank paper etc when required.