

# MERE SCHOOL

## Homework Policy

“An effective homework programme helps to raise achievement and improve pupils’ motivation” OFSTED report on homework 1999. This homework policy is mainly based on advice contained in ‘Homework: Guidelines for Primary Schools’ published by the Department for Education and Employment April 1998.

### What is homework?

Homework refers to any work or activity which children are asked to do outside lesson time, either on their own or with their parents or carers. It is important that children view homework as valuable and that it does not become a burdensome chore which may lead to disinterest and a negative effect on their work.

### The purpose of homework

- To develop an effective partnership between school and home in pursuing the aims of the school;
- To consolidate, reinforce and extend knowledge, skills and understanding, particularly in literacy and numeracy;
- To exploit resources for learning of all kinds at home;
- To extend school learning, for example through additional reading or discussion with adults and others;
- To encourage children to develop the confidence and self discipline needed to plan their own time, study on their own and to prepare them for the increasing demands of the secondary school.

A reading record book is used throughout the school and provides opportunities for dialogue between home and school and a reading record. In Years 1, 2 and throughout Key Stage 2 a special homework book is used. Parents are encouraged to write comments in these books also.

### Key Stage 1

The key purpose is to develop a partnership with parents or carers by involving them actively in their children’s learning. The main focus of home activities should be on literacy and numeracy. Children should be encouraged to read to their parents or to listen to them reading for between 10 and 20 minutes a day.

Short activities of different kinds, reading together, learning words or their spellings, number facts provide an important opportunity for young children to talk about what they are learning to interested adults and to practice these key skills in a supportive intimate environment.

### Key Stage 2

As children become older homework provides an opportunity for them to develop the skills of independent learning and this should increasingly become its main purpose.

It is important the children establish the habit of regularly devoting periods of time, preferably at specific times, which should not be too long, to study on their own. This provides a good opportunity for them to begin to become independent managers of their own time. Homework should not always be used for ‘finishing off’ written work already done at school although, on occasions this will be appropriate.

Homework should still focus on literacy and numeracy, but science and other subjects will be added as children get older. Children should still read or listen to books for about 20 minutes a day. Writing or number tasks should be set on a weekly basis.

Homework can also be used as a way of monitoring children’s progress and attainment and also as a method of revision. Homework may also be used as a way of widening the breath of knowledge of a subject. All homework should be reviewed by the children and teacher after it has been completed. This may be in a whole class session, in small groups or the testing of aspects such as spellings and tables. Homework should always reflect a child’s best effort. Adult input and discussion can be a valuable way for parents to share in the work their child is doing at school.

### **Amount of Homework**

The precise amount of homework is less important than the intrinsic value of the tasks. Children will differ in their speed of working and levels of attainment. However a rough guide follows:

#### **Foundation Stage**

10 minutes a day for reading or sharing a book as well as time to talk about school activities of approximately 10 minutes a day.

#### **KS1**

15 minutes a day for reading or sharing a book as well as activities such as learning and practising spellings or number facts. One other piece of homework will be set weekly. Most homework will be completed in a designated book.

#### **KS2**

25 minutes a day for reading or sharing a book as well as practising spellings and tables. One other piece of homework will be set weekly progressing to 2 pieces in year 6. Most homework is completed in a designated homework book which will enable progress to be seen.

Homework should be set to allow children to complete it to fit in with home circumstances so that they will not be expected to produce homework for the following day. It is useful to establish a regular routine for this so that children can plan ahead. Children should be encouraged to be responsible for their homework books and ensuring they have the correct books and equipment available.

## **Pupils with special education needs**

This group of children may be given separate tasks that are different for the rest of the class. On the other hand it is important that they do as much in common with their peers as possible. Homework will be related closely to their individual needs and give plenty of opportunities for pupils to succeed. These activities may not always be written tasks.

## **The role of parents and carers**

We ask for your support in the following ways:

- provide a reasonably peaceful, working space for your child to do their homework- preferably at a regular time such as before they watch television.
- make it clear to your children that you value homework and support the school in explaining how it can raise their standards of attainment and help them make good progress;
- not to do the homework for your children but to advise and discuss it. If there are difficulties please comment to the teacher;
- expect deadlines to be met and check that they are;
- give praise for the completion of homework.

## **The role of Teachers**

Teachers should:

- consistently set homework appropriate to children's level of attainment which should consolidate and extend their progress;
- respond to homework through formal marking or discussion of homework with children, this will vary according to the age of children but must not be at the expense of other lesson preparation;
- be available to discuss homework with parents or use the PACT or homework book to write comments. Such discussions will generally be on an informal basis after school but if there are any major issues a meeting should be formally arranged.

## **Monitoring and evaluation of this policy**

There should be regular monitoring, by teachers and parents of the contribution homework is making to children's progress. Such monitoring should be based upon an evaluation of what homework has contributed to raising pupils' attainment and rate of progress, levels of completion by pupils, and whether pupil's individual targets have been met.

If a child consistently fails to meet homework deadlines or fails to complete homework, the teacher should seek to explore the reasons for this in consultation with parents.

