

At St George's School Edgbaston, homework compliments the work done by children during the school day. From Reception onwards, all pupils will be required to undertake some homework during the week. Class teachers are required to ensure homework is relevant and appropriately challenging. Parents are asked to support their child, and to ensure that homework is regularly completed and returned to school.

Homework is an important part of a child's education, and can add much to a child's development. We see homework as an important example of cooperation between teachers and parents/carers. One of the aims of our teaching is for children to develop as independent learners, and we believe that doing homework is one of the ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning.

What sort of activities should children be doing?

Our homework activities are related to the work children are doing at school, but will not always be written work. It should be noted that homework can be set in many forms, with many different expectations and outcomes. Homework may include craft activities, ICT based work using 'Bug Club', 'Mathletics' or other internet based games and activities, written work, practicing skills, learning songs or assembly words, extended writing or research, solving problems, using equipment in a real life context, completing literacy, maths or other work.

Homework can play a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. However, 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 School's extra-curricular activities, or the activities they do at home that play an important part in the lives of our pupils. We are well aware that children spend more time at home than at school, and we believe that they develop their interests and skills to the full only when parents/carers encourage them to make maximum use of the opportunities available outside school.

Reading

Reading at home is an essential part of St George's Homework policy. All pupils will be expected to read at home a minimum of four times a week, and daily reading practice is encouraged. It is vital throughout both key stages that pupils work on their reading skills, read regularly to an adult and discuss the contents of what they have read. Being read to, and discussing what they have listened to, also benefits your child enormously. This allows them to focus on understanding the content and meaning of text. Sharing books is just as valuable in aiding a child's progress in reading, as your child reading to you or to their teachers.

Ideally parents should read with their children every day to help them develop a love of books and stories, and help them to grow in confidence. We ask parents and carers to sign their child's Reading Record to show that they have heard their child read and discussed their books with them on at least three occasions during each week.

Improving key life skills

Social skills, evaluation skills, problem solving, managing feelings and working collaboratively are key life skills. Developing key life skills improves children's motivation and approach to life and learning. Working together as a team, sharing, communicating feelings etc. develops a confident child who has no fear of getting things wrong or having a go! Activities, games or helping around the house can develop Maths and English skills, but are also vital life skills and are fun too!

For example: -

- Board games - Playing scrabble is a great way of learning to spell, but also teaches turn taking, solving problems and losing! The game 'Articulate' develops children's vocabulary and speaking and listening skills.

- Card games are great for developing mental maths, independence and patience!
- Dominoes are a great way to learn number bonds.
- The St George's 'Home Activities Pack' will give you lots of fun ideas as to how you can support your child - without paper and pen!
- Talk Tasks – simple discussion topics for all the family. The aim is to develop the children's vocabulary, imagination, and speaking and listening skills.

Should I help my child with homework?

Homework allows you to see what your child is doing and to support their learning. The partnership between school and home is a vital part of a successful education.

We take the view that children are more likely to get more out of an activity if parents get involved. If you are unsure about how much help to give, you should discuss it with your child's teacher. They will be pleased to see you, and will help you to get the balance right.

It is expected that, up to Year Four, parents will work with and support (when needed) children with their homework. From Year Five onwards, children will be expected to work more independently to prepare them for secondary education.

We encourage parents to write a brief comment about how, or if they supported their child, or to let us know if their child had any difficulties with the task.

Inclusion and homework

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, and 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 SEND Register, we refer to those pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and/or SMART targets. We value and celebrate the cultural diversity of our pupils and their families, and we appreciate the enrichment that this brings.

Use of ICT

A copy of the school's E-Safety policy is available from the school office and may also be found on the school website. The child's safety is paramount in all matters regarding use of the internet, and we advise parents and carers to always supervise their child's access to the internet. The use of ICT and the Internet has made a significant contribution to the amount of reference material available at home, and the ease and speed with which it can be accessed. However, our teachers expect their pupils to produce their own work, perhaps by editing something they have found, or by expressing it in their own words. The children are not achieving anything worthwhile by copying, pasting and printing out something that has been written by somebody else.

There are many websites containing highly educational material which can have a powerful effect on children's learning. We also make use of the 'Mathletics' and 'Bug Club' computer programmes at school and at home.

We discourage children from bringing computer disks or memory sticks into school, because of the risk of viruses. However, when appropriate, a teacher might suggest that a child's work is e-mailed to the teacher at school.

How much time should my child spend on their homework?

Homework should not cause undue stress on the pupil, family or teacher. If your child is having difficulty completing a task, please refer to the time guide in this document and discuss this with your child's class teacher, or write a note in their homework book/diary.

Foundation Stage pupils will be set a small amount of homework designed to support their acquisition of key skills. It is vital that children read at home to an adult, discussing the content of what they have read. Parents in the Foundation Stage are sometimes surprised that such young children receive homework. However, the activities given are simple and fun to do with the family, and help children learn important skills in an enjoyable way.

Year 1 and Year 2, pupils will be set a small amount of homework designed to support their acquisition of key skills. It is vital that children read at home with an adult, discussing the content of what they have read – remember this can include sharing books and reading to your child.

Years 3 to 6 are also expected to read regularly at home to an adult, and as independent reading skills develop, pupils should be encouraged to read for pleasure. During Years 3 and 4 the focus remains on the acquisition of key skills. When pupils move into Years 5 and 6, homework will also support the development of independent research skills, vital for their transition into secondary schools. Although some tasks/projects will require some level of adult support, we encourage pupils to carry out homework as independently as possible.

Each week pupils will be expected to undertake the following tasks:

Reception	Daily reading. Pupils should be heard read for ten to fifteen minutes at a time, and practice sight recognition of their key words. Parents should make a record of reading sessions in the Reading Record. Your child will bring home an activity that supports their current learning, in addition to their weekly 'Talk Task'.
Year 1	In addition to regular reading at home, pupils will be set weekly spellings. These will be designed to support your child's phonic phase, and will include high frequency words. They will also be set a 20 mins task of either English or Maths homework, in addition to their weekly 'Talk Task'.
Year 2	In addition to regular reading and weekly spellings, pupils will be required to spend some time each week learning times tables or number bonds set by the class teacher. They will also be set a 20 mins task of either English or Maths homework, in addition to their weekly 'Talk Task'.
Year 3	In addition to regular reading and weekly spellings, pupils will be required to spend some time each week learning times tables, inverse division facts or consolidating number bonds. They will also be set a piece of both English and Maths homework as well as their weekly 'Talk Task'. Each task should last no longer than 20 minutes.
Year 4	In addition to regular reading and spellings, pupils will be required to spend some time each week learning times tables and inverse division facts. They will also be set a piece of both English and Maths homework, as well as their weekly 'Talk Task'. Each task should last no longer than 20 minutes.
Year 5	Pupils should be encouraged to read for 20mins daily as they move towards becoming fully independent readers. Weekly spellings will be set, along with Maths and English tasks, as well as their weekly 'Talk Task'. Each task should last no longer than 30 minutes. Pupils will be set a half termly research project in an additional curriculum area.
Year 6	Pupils should be encouraged to read for 20mins daily as they move towards becoming fully independent readers. Weekly spellings will be set, along with Maths and English tasks as well their weekly 'Talk Task'. Each task should last no longer than 30 minutes. Pupils will be set a half termly research project in an additional curriculum area.

Homework will be set by the class teacher, and is integrated into their planning. All tasks set are appropriate to the ability of the child. It is normal that within any class different homework activities are given to different groups of children to ensure the activities matches the children's ability. Where relevant the teacher will provide a clear instruction sheet each week, which will be glued into the homework book for reference.

Each class in school has a Homework timetable and these will be sent out to you on the termly Topic Webs. They will inform you of the day your child's teacher sets their homework, and the date it is due to be handed in. Pupils in Years Five and Six will be given a Planner where homework is recorded. We encourage pupils to fill in the planner themselves; however support will be given where needed.

All pupils will be given an exercise book where they can record their homework. They will also be provided with a Reading Log for you to record your comments. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 are encouraged to write a comment when they have read independently. Replacement Reading Logs will be charged at a cost of £1.20.

Occasionally homework is not set:

- If the class misses the lesson during which homework is set e.g. if the class is on a trip
- If the member of staff is absent from school
- In the last few days of term

It is not possible to set homework or additional work if parents take holidays during term time.

We do not set homework during the Summer Holiday as we believe the children need and benefit from a rest during this time. However it is appropriate for children to continue to read and be read to during this time. They can also access their BugClub, Mathletics and Nessy accounts.

If a child is absent for a length of time due to illness or injury, the teacher and the parent will agree what work should be done, what help needs to be given and how it should be marked.

What will happen if children don't complete their homework?

The expectation is that children will complete their homework. However, if for any reason children are unable to complete their homework, parents or carers should provide the class teacher with a note or contact the class teacher explaining why the homework has not been completed on the day that the homework was due to be returned to school. Teachers will keep records of children completing homework and these records will be checked on a regular basis. A comment will be made on the children's report.

If parents and carers have any questions about homework, they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher. If it is felt that concerns are not resolved, parents are encouraged to contact the Head of Lower School or Deputy Head of Lower School.

Things you can do to help your child learn:

- Give your child confidence through lots of praise and encouragement.
- Try to set time aside to support your child's homework activities, whilst allowing some independence where appropriate.
- Try to help your child see the enjoyable aspects of homework. With your support homework tasks can be part of 'quality time' where the focus is on fun and learning.
- Encourage your child to discuss their homework with you. Let them show you the strategies or key skills they have learned in class.
- Try to provide a quiet, suitable place where your child can work.
- Help your child to see the importance and value of homework, and explain how it can help learning.
- Remind your child to complete and hand homework in on time. A copy of your child's homework programme will be provided at the start of each term, copies of which can be found on the School website.
- Read to, and with, your child as much as possible.
- Encourage your child to talk about what they see, feel, think etc
- Make use of your local library.
- Visit museums, art galleries and other places your child might find interesting.
- Look for places to visit as a family that will support your child's current topic. Topic Webs are sent home at the start of each new term.
- There are many suitable documentary programmes on television that will support your child's acquisition of facts related to their termly topic. Watching them together allows you to discuss what you have both learnt.

- Watch other children's' television programmes with your child and discuss what you see and hear. Children gain a lot more from this shared experience, and it will help you monitor the suitability of what they are watching.
- Refer to the St George's Homework Activity Pack for some great ideas for activities on the move!

Useful equipment to have at home:

Pens, pencils, ruler, measuring tape, colouring pencils, dictionary, thesaurus, crayons, scissors, craft products, glue, paints, card and paper.

Policy reviewed: June 2017

Next review: June 2018

This policy will be reviewed by the Lower School teaching staff and SLT.