



Notting Hill Preparatory School

3.13 Homework Policy

(EYFS & KS1-3)

Reviewer responsible: **Deputy Head (Director of Studies)** Date of last review: **09/20**

Reviewed by: NS

Date of next review: **09/21**

Homework Policy

1. Rationale

This policy sets out our rationale for setting, assessing and feeding back on homework to the pupil, namely:

- Homework is a way of complementing and reinforcing work done in school
- Homework helps to ensure that pupil have assimilated new knowledge/ideas that have been introduced in class
- Homework which is thoughtfully set fosters in pupil the self-motivation, interest in their work and ability to think and learn for themselves
- Homework gives pupil the opportunity to learn organisational skills and develop the discipline to complete tasks working independently
- Homework is another valuable tool for us in assessing the pupil's progress and improving our teaching

2. Guidelines

Our homework regime is framed to give the pupil an increasing but manageable amount of homework relative to their age and development.

It is set out in the Homework Timetables which we publish to staff and parents. Advice for parents on how we implement the homework programme is found in our Curriculum Handbooks.

In the Lower School the reading for each day is noted in the reading journal. No formal homework is set for pupil in Reception, although optional Handwriting, Maths and Phonics activities may be provided. Reading books are given to take home and pupil are encouraged to spend 10 minutes sharing their book with an adult each day. Pupil in Year 1 have daily reading homework and weekly spellings. In the Summer Term they are given a weekly Maths challenge. Pupil in Year 2 are given daily reading and spelling homework tasks and a weekly Maths challenge.

The time allocated to homework will increase gradually from 20 minutes each night in Year 3 progressing up to between 60 and 70 minutes per night as the pupil progress through the school.

All pupil will be taught effective homework strategies with which to support and develop the learning done in school. Every effort will be made by teachers to ensure that where tasks are set for independent study only, the pupil *actually* possess the knowledge and study skills to attack the tasks on their own.

Parents are warmly encouraged to take lively interest in their child's homework and to support, without doing it for them.

2.1 Recording Homework

Teachers work closely with parents to ensure that pupil are able to work confidently and independently at the set tasks. From Year 3 to 8, pupil are given a homework timetable and an NHP Diary, in which they should log their homework and the daily reading they are expected to do.

Teachers are expected to explain homework clearly to all pupils and make due dates known, planning in lesson time for giving out homework. Teachers are advised to take special note of pupil who struggle with auditory processing or working memory. Writing the homework on the board is an ideal way of supporting all pupil and making the tasks clear. Teachers are required to take particular account of pupil with specific learning difficulties, who may find it harder to process instructions in class, and take longer to complete tasks at home. Differentiation applies equally to school and home work.

Teachers are required to include homework in their weekly lesson plans. This is one of the school's planning 'non-negotiables'.

(See also Policy for Teaching and Learning)

2.2 Timing

Teachers are also expected to take careful note of the time allocations for homework for each year group, and adhere to them by planning for homework. The school day is exhausting enough for pupil without their being overtaxed at home as well.

The pupil themselves are often keen to exceed the time allocation to finish homework. We remind them that, although their industry is to be celebrated and running a few minutes over in their zeal to complete is fine, they should go no further. They can write a note on the work indicating where they reached in the allocated time, or ask their parents to explain to the teacher why the task was not finished (**see 2.6 below**).

As a general rule, we encourage pupil to do work on the day appointed in the homework timetable. We exercise more flexibility in Year 7-8. Not only is the workload more onerous, but the pupil learn to plan their own working week, a skill which will be needed at senior school.

If a child is experiencing difficulties understanding the *nature* of the homework set, or is finding the work itself difficult, parents should note this in the NHP Diary. Parents should sign the NHP Diary every night that homework is set and the book should be checked at least once a week by the form teacher. In Year 7 and 8, we are content that the parent should sign the NHP Diary at least twice a week.

Homework should be marked promptly wherever possible, or at least marked and handed back at an appropriate review point so the feedback makes sense to the pupil (please refer to school's policy on Assessment, Recording and Reporting). Comments should focus on praise for meaningful effort and be task-specific, outlining in precise and relevant terms the next steps the pupil should take to improve.

2.3 Promoting pupil's wellbeing

Pupil faced with public exams - 11+ and school pre-tests in Year 6/7, and Common Entrance or Scholarship, in Year 8 - can find it debilitating trying to manage the combined homework and stress this entails. In the interests of protecting pupil's wellbeing and prioritising rigorous preparation in the knowledge and skills they need for these exams/tests, the Deputy Head (Director of Studies), in consultation with other teachers, may introduce the following sorts of modifications:

- Streamlined homework timetable in Year 4-5 to focus on core 11+ knowledge and skills
- Adapted Year 6 homework timetable in Autumn Term
- Homework reductions or exemptions for pupil sitting a school exam/test at a 'non-conventional' testing date

Changes will always be communicated in good time to parents, teachers and pupil.

2.4 Non-completion of homework (Year 5-8)

We feel that it is important for pupil to do homework to the best of their ability for the length of time allotted, for their own intellectual development. However, it is also important as a gesture to the rest of the class; that expectations are shared, pupil are treated fairly and equally, and learning is a collaborative process.

Teachers may impose a sanction for failure to complete homework or do it to the standard expected of that child. The procedures can be found in the Middle and Upper School Handbooks.

In summary, we want to arm pupil with the organisation skills to manage their work independently, recognising that these skills can be learned like all others. As importantly, we try to foster the view that organisation matters, and should be taken seriously, modelling our own good habits for the pupil.

2.5 Printing Homework

Many pupil, SEN or otherwise, are permitted to do their homework electronically. The same rules apply for submission of non-typed homework. Homework should be printed off, stuck in books/folders as required, and handed in by the deadline stated by the teacher. It should not be e-mailed to the teacher for them to print.

Work done electronically in class, however, may be sent to the teacher or a member of the school Admin team for printing.

2.6 Advice for communicating any homework problems with the school

Pupil should try to finish homework within the time allocated by the teacher. If they are close to finishing the work, they are advised that they can allow themselves a little extra time to finish the task. However, if they are unlikely to complete it, then they should stop. A comment in the NHP Diary or in the exercise book can be made by a parent or the older pupil, to explain that the work was not able to be finished within the allotted time.

Sometimes pupil are very eager to finish a task they are passionately engaged in. We are happy to encourage this sense of industry and pride as long as the time spent is not excessive or prevents the child completing tasks set in other subjects.

2.7 Homework during school holidays

As a general rule pupil will not receive homework over half-terms* or the longer holiday periods.

There are some exceptions to this rule:

- Pupil in Year 8 can expect some targeted tasks in half terms and the longer holidays to assist them in their preparation for Common Entrance or Scholarship [they have mock exams in November and March]
- Pupil selected at the end of Year 7 as scholarship candidates can expect to receive tasks in all subjects during the summer vacation prior to Year 8, to accelerate their learning for these more arduous exams
- Pupil who join us in Year 7 will receive holiday packs in the summer holiday prior to their joining. This work is at the discretion of individual subject teachers. For example, some of our pupil new to Year 7 may not have studied a foreign language before
- Pupil in Year 7 will be expected to revise in the half-terms immediately prior to their spring and summer exams, and will be given revision guidance by their teachers to assist them in this
- Pupil in Year 6 can expect English, Maths or Reasoning work in the October half term and the Christmas holiday immediately prior to 11+ and pre-tests
- Pupil about to enter Year 6 receive summer holiday packs in Maths, English and Reasoning (the latter where appropriate)
- Pupil in Year 6 will need to learn the lines for their part in the school play in the Spring half-term
- Pupil may be asked to write or learn a poem for the Poetry Recital or Writing Competition during a half-term
- In the Lower School, we recognise the need for the pupil to refresh and consolidate their learning during the long breaks. However, it is important that pupil also have time to rest and recuperate. Therefore class teachers will suggest optional activities before the end of each term. These tasks will be designed to be completed at home without the need for teacher intervention and will allow you the chance to work with your child and observe their progress

*A homework given on the last Friday before half-term counts as a normal homework and should be completed in the normal way.

Beyond this, a child will only receive half term or holiday work where it is felt that a learning need requires particular consolidation or where further intervention is required to boost the pupil's learning at a crucial stage in their journey.