



GOFFS OAK PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

HOMEWORK POLICY

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Introduction

Homework allows children to develop and consolidate skills and concepts learnt in the classroom and to explore aspects of the curriculum within the home environment. It also offers the opportunity for parents to learn more about the work their children do at school, and participate more fully in that learning.

Homework can help children to be more independent and give them the opportunity to show initiative. We ask parents to encourage their children to think for themselves but at the same offer help and guidance if needed.

Parents and children are welcome and encouraged to seek the help of the teaching staff if there is a difficulty or if they consider their child is not benefiting from the work at home.

At Goffs Oak Primary and Nursery School homework aims to both develop children's learning, and their enjoyment of it. This policy has been formulated after consultation with parents, children, staff and governors and aims to reflect the ethos of our school.

We define homework as any activity that pupils undertake outside of school lesson time, either on their own or with the support of family members. At Goffs Oak Primary we have a strong commitment to parental involvement and see homework as one way of developing this partnership.

Why give homework?

- It can inform parents about work going on in class;
- It can further stimulate enthusiasm for learning;
- It takes advantage of the home environment and resources and the chance for some one to one adult time;
- It can be a great source for gathering topic information to share with all the children;
- It is a great opportunity to rehearse key skills such as times tables, doubling facts, addition sums, spellings, handwriting and other key facts;
- It helps to foster good habits of organisation and self-discipline in preparation for the demands of Secondary School.

Homework at our school

Whilst we support all of the above key principles, Goffs Oak Primary School is not a school at which homework dominates home and school life. We accept that not every activity will capture children and parents' imagination and that weekends can sometimes be busy. We believe that homework should be enjoyable and manageable for all concerned and that if it becomes a chore/burden/source of conflict it ceases to be a constructive aspect of teaching and learning. Homework registers are kept and if a child consistently fails to complete and return tasks, this is discussed with the child and their parents. Individual teachers are happy to give advice on the completion of tasks when needed.

The three aspects of homework at Goffs Oak Primary School

- The School's Badge Scheme
- Informal work conducted by children from home in order to prepare for or explore further an aspect of work in school (for example going to the library to discover more about life in Tudor times, visiting a website with parents, making a model to enhance a topic project).
- Directed homework from school (for example spellings, reading and more formal homework in Key Stage Two)

The Goffs Oak Primary School Badge Scheme

The Scheme owes a lot to the idea of badge work found in the Cubs, Scouts, Brownies etc. We recognise the motivation this can give to children and wish to adapt the system for use in our school. Children elect to work towards a particular badge (it is a voluntary scheme) and on completion have their work checked, possibly put on display, and then receive their badge in a special assembly. The scheme encourages children to work with parents, broadens their experiences in both curriculum subjects and other areas and highlights their talents and qualities. More details can be found by enquiring at the school office or by visiting homework section of our website.

Informal homework

At the beginning of the Autumn Term and before the Spring and Summer Terms curriculum newsletters are sent to parents which provide an overview of the learning that is due to take place in school when the children return from their break. Updates to these are also provided before each half-term. As well as providing a useful overview of forthcoming learning, the newsletters offer a variety of relevant homework ideas. Pupils are encouraged to undertake the suggested activities in order to be better prepared, and to become more involved in their learning.

Curriculum Newsletters are also available from our website under the 'Class Newsletters' link.

Directed homework

The school recognises the importance of directed homework in consolidating skills learnt in the classroom. We do however wish to ensure that this does not become over burdensome for children and becomes a deterrent to learning. It is imperative that if you feel homework is making your child unhappy or you perceive any difficulties at all, that you contact your child's class teacher immediately.

Children with special educational needs will have differentiated homework where appropriate, and may also receive extra work set by either the class teacher or the SENCo.

The following aims to give clear guidance regarding the amount and type of homework expected.

Directed Homework is given to all pupils, and they are positively rewarded for completing it. Directed homework will often be paper-based.

Broadly speaking these are current expectations:

Nursery – sharing books and talking about what has been happening in school. Discussing the topics as a family

Reception – daily reading, learning key words and engaging with ½ termly tasks to be done alongside your child. In the Summer Term more formal phonic homework is introduced

Year 1 and 2 – daily reading, spellings / phonics, weekly Friday homework(15 – 20 minutes) that alternates between maths and English/topic. Again, many of the tasks will involve paired work with your child

Years 3 and 4 – daily reading, weekly times tables (for a weekly test), spellings and a longer weekly task (20 – 30 minutes) alternating between English/topic and maths

Years 5 and 6 - daily reading, weekly times tables (for a weekly test), spellings and 2 longer tasks each week (20 – 30 minutes) - English/topic and maths. Occasionally extended projects running for a few weeks will be set.

We expect children to maintain the same standards for presentation of homework as we set in school i.e. to use their best handwriting and a sharp pencil or blue handwriting pen.

Class teachers will differentiate homework as necessary.

In the few weeks prior to SATs tests, the Year 6 children will be given additional revision work.

It is our policy not to give homework over the holidays and half term breaks, with the exception of reading and times tables practice, which will be tested on the return to school. During the break the children could work towards a school badge or to complete some of the informal homework tasks.

The exception will be where the parent and teacher agree extra work would be beneficial.

Our routines and expectations

All classes give out directed homework on a Friday. If it is a piece that needs handing in, it is expected to be returned by the following Wednesday. The work will always have been explained and discussed in class before coming home; it may be a continuation of classwork, or a maths games already familiar to your child. It is our intention, and good practice, not to send work home that the child cannot already do i.e. parents are not expected to teach new skills.

There will be a clear explanation/reminder from the teacher of what is expected.

All directed work will be acknowledged by the class teacher, but every question may not be marked in detail. It will be dependent on the task.

All informal learning tasks are to be given to the class teacher.

Badge scheme work is to be given into the Headteacher. There will be one dedicated assembly each half term to acknowledge achievements in this area.

What to do if you have concerns

If you find the homework inappropriate for your child, if they lack interest, if it becomes a battleground or if you are concerned that homework is given inconsistently please talk with your child's teacher in the first instance.

If you still have concerns, please talk with the Headteacher.