



Wellington School

Homework Policy

Guidance for Parents

The Purpose of Homework

Regular homework is important because it helps our pupils to:

- practise, reinforce and consolidate what they have learned in class
- prepare for work to be undertaken in class in the future
- take responsibility for organising their own time and work
- become independent learners and undertake individual research
- challenge and raise their expectations
- raise the standard of their academic achievements
- consolidate and develop classwork

Regular homework also gives you, the parents, the opportunity to be aware of the work your children are doing in school and encourages you to be involved with your child's work and to support their learning.

All homework will help pupils improve by allowing teachers to monitor each pupil's progression and set homework tasks appropriate to their individual needs.

In the Infant Department parents are asked to check the reading card or homework diary to ensure that their child is aware of the expectations. They are also asked to set aside a time and place that is suitable for the child to work properly and are also asked to praise their child's efforts, even if there is not total success.

NB If you feel that your child is having difficulty, with content or with time, stop your child at an appropriate point and send a note of explanation to the teacher so that help and guidance can be given. Please sign all worksheets, reading cards and homework diaries to indicate that your child has made the best possible effort with your encouragement. If you find that your child has taken a shorter than indicated time to complete homework, encourage him or her to spend the remainder of the time in private reading or topic research on the internet.

Expectations of pupils

- Pupils must record homework in their homework diary as soon as it is given to them and should set aside a regular time each evening for homework.
- Pupils should do homework on the night they receive it whenever possible; homework should not be left to the last minute, as this will inevitably reduce the quality of the work submitted.
- Pupils must ensure that they do their homework in an environment which allows them to concentrate and focus. Homework must not be done on trains or buses. It should not be done where there will be any distractions or loud background noise.
- Pupils should endeavour to complete all homework to the highest possible standard they can.
- Pupils should always meet homework deadlines.

How much time should be spent on homework?

Senior Years

Senior 1 and 2

In Senior 1 and 2, pupils are expected to undertake approximately 1 – 1.5 hours each evening during term time. Homework is not set during holiday periods unless specifically requested by individual parents.

Senior 3 and 4

S3 and S4 are very important years in a child's education as they prepare for certificated exams which will get them a place on higher level courses in S5 and S6. Therefore, a good amount of quality homework should be done at least 5 nights a week. **Pupils in S3 and S4 should be doing at least 2 hours of homework each night.**

Primary Years

Primary 1

Homework set by the class teacher should take about fifteen or twenty minutes to complete and will normally be set for four nights of the week. In the first part of the year the main focus will be literacy and parents are required to be involved to ensure the success of this. As the year progresses, literacy will remain a major part as reading work will be a requirement on many evenings, but Maths work may also be set, often in worksheet format.

Primary 2

Homework at this stage should take about twenty minutes to complete. Work based on the reading programme will be set regularly, and parents are needed to be the audience or the assistant. Other aspects of literacy such as learning spelling words, and short written activities may also be planned. Maths worksheets and activities reflecting classroom learning will be a regular requirement.

Primary 3

Homework in Primary 3 should take between twenty and thirty minutes to complete. Reading and spelling homework will be regular requirements. Other literacy activities will include preparation of a plan for a written task, preparation of a talk to the class, or a book review. Memory tasks such as poetry or multiplication tables will feature throughout the year, and worksheets to consolidate maths learning will also be set.

Primary 4 – 6

Primary 4, 5 and 6 should be set homework each night, Monday – Friday; Primary 4 for between twenty and thirty minutes and Primary 5 and 6 for thirty minutes.

Primary 7

Primary 7 pupils will be set homework of half an hour's duration per week-night from August to Christmas and of an hour's duration from January until June. This will usually include Maths and Language or Environmental Studies. Additionally, each weekend one piece of homework will be given, usually involving personal research. Sometimes extended pieces of homework are set; if this is the case, guidelines are issued and a timescale suggested for completion of the task. From time to time Subject Teachers may also set homework, but this will only be done with the knowledge of the Primary 7 teachers and will be taken into account in the week's allocation.

How can you help?

Showing an interest

The most important thing any parent or guardian can do is show an interest in your children's homework. Check their homework diaries every day to see when they have homework and when it is due. Encourage your children to do homework on the night they receive it and discuss it with them.

If the homework diary does not contain many entries, then ask your child about this and contact their Year Head for assistance. Check that the homework in the planner has actually been completed and if requested countersign the completed homework.

Help your child to set aside regular time for homework and provide a suitably quiet environment for them to do it. If this is not always possible at home then help them to find an alternative location such as the local library.

Make sure that your son or daughter spends a minimum amount of time on their homework in order to do it well. Do not be fobbed off with excuses that it has all been done, check it!

Make it clear to your child that you as a parent or guardian value homework and support the school in its efforts to help your child do well and improve their learning.

Praise and encourage your child when they have finished their tasks.

Planning homework

Parents can look over homework exercises with their children and discuss what is required of them. You can help pupils understand what they are expected to do and help them plan what they are going to do before tackling the exercises.

Use of Reference Materials

Parents can direct pupils to suitable reference materials such as dictionaries, encyclopaedias, newspaper articles or television documentaries which may aid children's learning and research. This will also help to familiarise children with how to gather information and evidence and help with every aspect of their education.

Surfing the web

Parents can supervise and assist pupils as they look up information on the internet. It is always helpful to children to have somebody who can **focus** their internet searches and ensure that information is relevant to the homework task set.

Checking Homework

Parents can look over the work their children have done and offer ideas and advice. Obviously parents should not do their children's homework for them, but can always offer advice and assistance to help the child to overcome difficulties. Do not give the child the answer, but ask them questions which may help to lead them to the answer.

Parents can listen to speeches and readings and offer advice on content and delivery. They can look at written work and offer advice on how it could be developed or articulated.

Discussing homework with your children lets them see that you think it is valuable and important. It lets them know that you are interested in what they are doing and it is often invaluable in helping your child to improve their learning and attainment.

Pupils record all homework exercises in a homework diary; checking this and the homework itself will allow you to identify any problem areas. We would appreciate your support in ensuring that your child completes all homework, to a high standard, and submits this on time to his/her class teacher. From time to time you may also be asked to sign your child's homework and/or homework diary; this is essential to maintain good communication between school and home and we would value your support in this endeavour to improve homework issues. Form Tutors will also be doing more frequent checks on homework diaries to ensure that these are being completed satisfactorily by pupils.

Problems

If any pupil is spending a disproportionate amount of time on homework or is having difficulties in organising and planning homework, he/she should feel free to speak with their Form Tutor or the Year Head about this.

Contacts

If you would like any further advice or assistance or wish to discuss any aspect of homework, please contact the Deputy Head or the Year Head:

Mr D Stovell, Deputy Head

Mr S Green, Assistant Head (S3/S4)

Mrs N O'Connell, Assistant Head (S1/S2)

Mrs C Clark, Head of Primary 7

Mr C Robinson, Assistant Head (P4/P5/P6)

Mrs P McLaren, Assistant Head (P1/P2/P3)

In addition, pupils are expected to arrive at school with sufficient equipment to aid their learning. As a minimum this includes: pens, pencils, coloured pencils/pens, eraser, calculator, ruler, protractor, and a pair of compasses, as well as the appropriate exercise books and text books for the subjects they study each day. We would appreciate your support in ensuring that your child has the appropriate materials with them.