

HOMEWORK AT ALWYN (Feb 2013)



At Alwyn, we see the purpose of homework as an opportunity:

- to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school, and to allow children to practice skills taught at school;
- for parents/carers, the child and school to work in partnership;
- for parents/carers to be actively involved in the child's learning;
- to enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development;
- to help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner;
- to provide educational experiences not possible in school;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future.

Homework is anything children do outside the normal school day that contributes to their learning, in response to guidance from the school. Homework encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents/carers to support the children's learning. For example, parents/carers who spend time reading stories to their children before bedtime are helping with homework.

Homework is a very important part of a child's education, and can add much to a child's development. We recognise that the educational experience that any school by itself can provide is limited by the time and resources available; children can therefore benefit greatly from the complementary learning that they do at home. Indeed we see homework as an important example of cooperation between teachers and parents. 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 main ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning.

Homework plays 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 activities of various out-of-school clubs and of other organisations 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 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.

Staff and pupils regard homework as an integral part of the curriculum - it is planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of learning.

Range of Tasks:

Reception: Reading, Sounds, Key words

Year 1: Reading, Sounds, Key words, Maths activity

Year 2: Reading, Sounds, Key words, Maths activity, Spellings, Reading Comprehension

Homework Timetable

Reception

- A recommended ten minutes daily reading (Teacher and parents/carers to write in the reading record book)
- Sounds and/or key words to be practised daily

Year One

- A recommended ten minutes daily reading (Teacher and parents/carers to write in the reading record book)
- Sounds and/or key words to be practised daily
- Plus a weekly numeracy task

Year Two

- Daily reading to continue (Teacher and parents/carers to write in the reading record book)
- Sounds and high frequency words may also be sent home to be practised daily
- A weekly numeracy task
- Key word spellings will be sent home weekly to be tested the following week
- Weekly reading comprehensions will be sent home when all the key words have been learnt
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In addition to these regular homework tasks, school provides planning at the start of each term to enable parents to support and enrich the child's Topic focus. For example, family outings, library visits, books, games and internet can enhance the children's curriculum work.

LITERACY:

All children are expected to read their school reading book regularly at home. Please remember to fill in their reading record book. The staff at Alwyn and a number of much appreciated parents and other volunteers try to hear the children read as often as possible. We listen to them read individually and in small groups. However we know that it makes a huge difference to a child's reading progress if they also read regularly to an adult at home. Every day would be great, but if not, as often as possible. Some children will also have key words and sounds to learn and they will begin to recognise these more quickly if they practise them at least once a day.

Please be aware that your child is able to change their reading book every day, if they have finished reading it with you at home. If, when you pick them up at the end of the day, you notice that they have not changed their reading book and you completed it with them the previous night, please return to the classroom and the teacher will change it for you.

Those children who have learnt most or all of their key words will be given a short text to read at home with you each week in addition to their reading book. The text will be followed by some comprehension questions. Try to let the children work as independently as possible, encouraging them to re-read the passage with you if they don't know the answer. If they do need a lot of help please write 'with help' next to the answer, so that we know the sort of questions that they need more support with. We would appreciate it if the children could return their comprehension homework during the following week if possible.

When the children are ready they will also have spelling homework at the beginning of the week. Please encourage your child to look at the word, read it and then copy it in the adjacent space. Then cover these words and see if they can write it on their own in the next space. If they write it correctly continue practising the word. If not, have another look at the word before trying again! We will be giving the children a short spelling test at the beginning of the following week. Some 'tricky' words will be repeated regularly for reinforcement.

NUMERACY:

The children will receive differentiated numeracy homework each week to be completed at home and returned the following week. Year 1 children will start to receive this homework after the half-term break. It is intended to review and practice the skills learnt that week and in doing so allows those at home to find out what they have been learning. Over time it should provide you at home with a more comprehensive insight into what is being taught at school and to develop a clearer appreciation of your children's strengths and areas for development. Numeracy homework will be given on a Friday and this will relate to work the children have covered during the week. We

would like the children to bring their work back to school any day the following week. Homework should only take about fifteen to twenty minutes and if it takes much longer, or if your child seems to be finding the work particularly easy or difficult, put a note on it to the teacher to that effect. Feedback is always welcome.

CONCLUSION:

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.

Parents/carers have a vital role to play in their child's education, and homework is an important part of this process. We ask parents/carers to encourage their child to complete the homework tasks that are set. We invite them to help their children as and when they feel it to be necessary and to provide them with the sort of environment that allows children to do their best. Parents can support their child by providing a good working space at home, by enabling their child to visit the library regularly, and by discussing the work that their child is doing.

If parents have any questions about homework, they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher. If their questions are of a more general nature, they should contact the headteacher.

Please look out for curriculum afternoons which parents have found very useful . Each one will focus on reading, writing and numeracy. We also offer bite-size sessions that focus on themes such as handwriting, phonics and addition.

February 2013