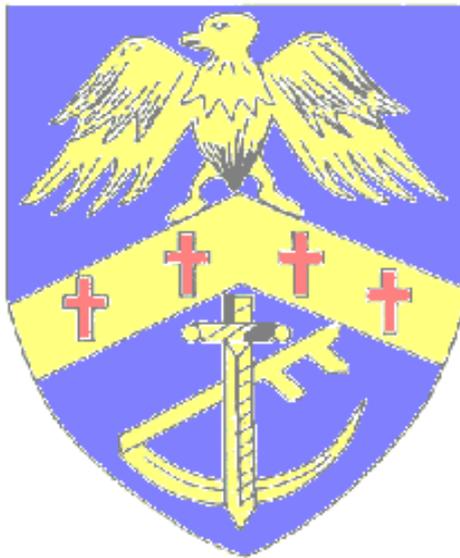


SUNNYMEDE JUNIOR SCHOOL

HOMEWORK POLICY



Ratified by Governing Body: July 2013
Review: Annually
Last Review: June 2016
This Review date: June 2017
Next Review Date: June 2018

Review date	Headteacher's signature	Chair of Governor's signature
June 2017		

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY?

A written policy makes the purposes of homework, and the basic principles we follow in setting and marking homework, clear to everyone involved.

WHAT IS HOMEWORK?

At Sunnymede Junior School we define 'homework' to mean any work or activities which pupils are asked to do outside lesson time, either on their own or with parents or carers. It is usually completed without the guidance of teachers but will usually be completed with guidance and support from parents. If there is good reason, it can be done at school but more usually it is done at home. Homework does not mean completing work which has not been completed in lessons.

WHAT IS THE RATIONALE FOR THIS POLICY?

At Sunnymede Junior School we believe that homework benefits children in a number of ways. It is intended to create a shared partnership between school, parent/ carer and child to enhance their learning. Homework is not designed to create anxiety, undue pressure or conflict between parents and children.

We are aware that there are a variety of views about homework and its importance. In writing this policy, we consulted widely with parents, pupils, teachers and governors through a comprehensive homework survey in December 2012. Results of these surveys have led us to write a homework policy which we believe will offer:

FLEXIBILITY: Children who are able to spend more time on homework on a weekly basis and during the holiday period will be able to do so using optional tasks set out in this policy.

CONSISTENCY: We recognise that many parents work and/ or have more than one child for whom to organise homework. To facilitate this, this policy establishes a familiar routine for pupils and parents/carers, ensuring that there is consistency amongst year groups in the nature of activities set, when they are set and when tests take place e.g. all children across the school will bring their spellings home on the same day and the tests will take place on the same day in all year groups.

A RANGE OF ACTIVITIES TO REFLECT THE CURRICULUM: It was clear from the survey results that children enjoy the more creative, cross-curricular homework tasks, where a number of parents/carers prefer more structured English and Maths activities, This policy aims to offer a balance of activity types, particularly in Years 3 to 5.

OPPORTUNITIES TO USE ICT TO ENHANCE LEARNING: We are aware that ICT is being used increasingly both in schools and in daily lives. We are keen for our pupils to use ICT regularly to support their homework and have invested in an online maths homework package (Mathletics) for our pupils-

WHY DO WE SET HOMEWORK AND WHY IS HOMEWORK IMPORTANT?

- It consolidates and builds on work done in school, including basic skills
- It helps to inform parents/carers about their child's school work and provides them with opportunities to engage actively in learning with their child
- It is a valuable life skill and develops good work habits for secondary school and future employment
- It promotes a partnership between home and school and encourages a shared approach to the child's learning
- It reinforces and builds on children's skills and understanding and encourages these to be applied outside of the school context
- It encourages self-discipline, independence and organisational skills, preparing pupils for secondary school and the workplace

HOW MUCH AND WHAT TYPE OF HOMEWORK WILL MY CHILD RECEIVE?

The table below provides an overview of the core homework your child will usually receive each week during term time, except during assessment week. Homework set will be linked to current learning, either consolidating or building upon recent learning that has taken place in school. Sometimes the activity will require them to prepare for a future activity that will take place in school.

The DFE recommends that homework for Y3/4/ pupils should total approximately 1.5 hours per week and in Years 5 and 6 this should rise to approximately 30 minutes per day. The timings set out below are only guidance as tasks may take more or less time depending on one or a number of factors e.g. some tasks set may be shorter some weeks than others, some children work at a slower / faster pace etc.

	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Daily Reading	15 mins per night		20 mins per night	
Spelling (prep for spelling test)	5 mins per night			
Daily Mental maths (prep for maths test)	5 mins per night			
Weekly online Maths Task (Homework club available for any children without Internet access at home)	Approx 15 mins per week			
Weekly English OR cross-curricular OR written/practical Maths Task* *These will take place on a three week cycle	Approx. 1 hour per week (this may vary slightly from week to week)			N/A
Weekly English Task (comprehension, grammar, spelling and punctuation activities)	N/A			Approx 1 hour per week
Other	N/A		Y6 An additional literacy task will be given most weeks from Spring term onwards. Past SATS maths questions will also be given from time to time.	

*In Year 3, this task is not set for the first half of the autumn term to allow pupils time to settle

WILL HOMEWORK BE SET DURING THE HOLIDAYS?

Homework will not be set during holiday periods. However, it is expected that the children will continue to read daily and practise their mental maths skills. In addition, optional projects are set which span a term and holiday period and these can be completed over the holiday if you wish.

WHEN WILL HOMEWORK BE SET AND WHEN MUST IT BE COMPLETED BY?

Setting of homework has been co-ordinated across the school with the aim of providing consistency for families with more than one child in the school.

A 'Homework Poster' for parents can be found at the end of this policy. It sets out on a day-by-day basis when tests take place, when tasks need to be completed by and what books need to be brought to school / home each day. Hard copies are available from the school office.

Please note, however, that there may be occasions when changes need to be made to the above schedule for different year groups e.g. due to a school trip or unforeseen circumstances. If possible, as much warning will be given (recorded in Homework Diary).

Additional guidance on the nature of each of the homework activities can be found in the following sections of the policy.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DAILY READING?

Reading continues to be as important to your child's development as it was in Infants. Reading is ongoing and parents should ensure their child engages in reading tasks on a daily basis, between 15 and 20 minutes and covering a range of text types over time (including newspapers). Less fluent readers should continue to read to a parent or carer. Where a child reads silently, parents/carers should hear

them read aloud from time to time to ensure they read with good pace and expression. They should also check children's understanding regularly by trying one or more of the suggested activities:

- Make detailed predictions at the start of the story or at key points as they read
- Explore and discuss the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary they come across
- Answer specific questions about what they have read, particularly those using inference and 'reading between the lines'
- Explain the layout, structure, organisation of a text (particularly non-fiction)
- Express preferences for characters, settings, plots etc. and give reasons for their choices
- Summarise the plot in five sentences
- Describe the characteristics of key characters and relationships between the different characters
- Discuss alternative endings
- Compare and contrast a text with similar texts by the same or different authors; explain how they are the same / different
- Identify the 'themes' or key ideas in stories e.g. love, friendship, war, birth, determination, equality

A *reading prompt booklet*, with a range of questions that parents can use to help them ask their pupils direct questions in relation to texts read, is given to all new Y3 parents in their induction pack and can be used throughout their time in the Junior school.

How many books will my child bring home?

Children have the opportunity to change their home reading book once per week on the day that they have their guided reading session. At this time they are able to choose two books, one at their current 'Book Band' reading level to allow them to consolidate their reading and one at a higher level in order to offer challenge. Children may also select a book of their choice, either from the school library or from the class book corner. These can also be changed once per week, though free choice books can be changed more frequently if they choose.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SPELLING TESTS?

Children will be given up to ten words to learn. Words will be linked to the letter patterns and rules being taught in class. They may also include high frequency words and topic words where relevant. Spelling words will be differentiated at least three ways within each year group and your child will bring home spellings most closely matched to their ability level.

In the weekly test the teacher will read each word and put it in the context of a sentence for the child to spell. The words may not be tested in the same order as the child recorded them in their spelling book. The teacher may also give children a challenge word that was not taken home but follows the same pattern. For example, if the children have been given 'tion' words, they may be given the test word 'invitation', even if it was not a word the child brought home. This enables the teacher to see if they are applying their understanding of the spelling rule rather than simply 'rote' learning the spellings. It is helpful, therefore, if parents reinforce the spelling pattern as part of the homework process and explore additional words that follow the spelling pattern of the words brought home. This makes the process of learning spellings more meaningful and reinforces the importance of application of spelling. In order to improve pupils' vocabulary, a vital part of their learning, it is important that the meaning of unfamiliar words are explored with your child.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MENTAL MATHS TESTS?

The weekly focus for the mental maths test will be recorded in your child's homework diary. This will often be linked to the multiplication facts but may, from time to time, cover other aspects of number. Whilst multiplication tables should be practised regularly as a matter of course, the teacher will set mental maths challenges each week linked to weekly focus.

The weekly test will be formed of 15 – 20 calculations / questions linked to the focus, with an appropriate amount of time to record them. Questions will be asked using a range of vocabulary e.g. the child may be asked to write the 'product' of 5 and 6' rather than '5 times 6'. Using such vocabulary at home will reinforce the vocabulary taught in school.

We also have a Times Table Challenge scheme operating in school, where children can be earn bronze, silver or gold awards for demonstrating their knowledge at different levels. Whilst this is not part of the homework policy, children will need to practise their times tables regularly at home to help them earn these awards.

WHAT IS THE WEEKLY ONLINE MATHS ACTIVITY?

Weekly maths tasks should be completed online using *Mathletics interactive* programme to which we subscribe as a school. This is fully safe and children will be given their own personal password at the start of each year.

Teachers will set up the weekly task each Friday for the children to access and complete. These tasks will have been differentiated to meet the needs of your child and will be based on work being taught in class. The task should take approximately 15 minutes. However, once the core task is completed, there is an option for children to complete an additional speed challenge if your child would like some extra practice.

If you do not have internet access, a homework club will take place once a week where you can encourage your child to come and complete their Maths task. Please let the class teacher know if you would like them to attend this club.

WHAT IS THE WEEKLY CREATIVE / ENGLISH / MATHS TASK FOR Years 3, 4 and 5?

The school recognises the importance of children receiving a broad and balanced curriculum. Therefore, in years 3, 4 and 5, the children will be set a task every third week that is linked to the wider curriculum. This may be linked to subjects such as science, art, technology, history, geography etc. It may also involve some form of research and will not always be a written task. This task will not always be differentiated as this may be by outcome (the quality of the work produced).

On the other weeks, a more traditional literacy or maths based task will be completed. This will be linked to an aspect of current learning and will be differentiated to meet the needs of your child. In English, it is likely to be a written reading comprehension, a short writing task or an activity linked to spelling, grammar or punctuation. In Maths, it may be a written or practical task / investigation and will be in addition to the online Mathletics task. These tasks may be a little shorter than the more cross-curricular or creative tasks set on the other weeks.

Provided the homework is completed and returned on time, this homework will be marked before it is returned. Where the task is something the child has made, the teacher will make a dated comment to acknowledge it in the child's homework diary.

WHAT IS THE WEEKLY ENGLISH TASK FOR YEAR 6 PUPILS?

In year six, the weekly task will focus on literacy based activities, rather than the wider curriculum. The task will be differentiated and cover the different aspects of literacy covered in class. Occasionally, a cross-curricular task may be set, particularly when there is a whole school focus for homework.

DO YEAR SIX PUPILS RECEIVE ANY ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK TO PREPARE THEM FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL?

In order to prepare Year 6 pupils for secondary school, additional weekly homework, along with holiday homework, will be set from the spring term. An additional literacy task will usually be set each week from the start of the spring term. Test questions for Maths from previous papers will also be set periodically from the autumn term, in addition to the online maths task. These will be marked together as a class and misconceptions addressed together. Your child will bring their work home so you can see the areas they need to improve upon and practise further in school and at home. You are encouraged to ask the teacher if you would like further guidance on the strategies so you can support you child in addressing these misconceptions.

OPTIONAL HOMEWORK

Except from the spring term in Year 6, we do not set specific homework during the holiday period. However, we appreciate that some parents/carers and children like to engage in activities during this period, as well as additional tasks during term time.

Homework Project

Therefore, in addition to the core weekly homework listed earlier, teachers will set a very open-ended homework project linked to the class topic that can be completed over the course of the term and during a holiday period. General guidance on the homework project will be outlined in the termly newsletter sent out at the start of each term but it will be the responsibility of parents/carers to develop the project to suit the amount of time they have and their own interests. Every aspect of the project will not be marked formally in school, though the returned project will be shared and celebrated fully with the class and informal feedback given to the child e.g. stickers and / or certificates may be awarded and it may be displayed for others to see. Three such projects will be set per year and these projects are entirely optional.

Autumn project: this will span the autumn half term and the Christmas holiday

Spring project: this will span the spring half term and the Easter holiday

Summer project: this will span the summer half term and will be due in by the end of June

Additional Maths Challenge

In addition to this, the online maths activity will be set up by the teacher each week so that children can complete an additional speed challenge if they wish.

We feel that it is important for children to spend time with their families and also to have time to play in order to stimulate their minds, be active, explore and develop their own personal interests outside of school. For those parents who do prefer more tasks, it is suggested that their child practises their writing skills by keeping a regular diary. They could be encouraged to work on their writing target which they bring home in their homework diary. However, there is nothing more powerful than enriching your child's experiences by engaging in social and cultural activities with them, such as visiting art galleries, museums, woodland and places of natural beauty etc.

WHAT HOMEWORK BOOKS WILL MY CHILD BRING HOME?

All children will have:

- **A reading record book:** for parents/carers children to record and make comments about books being read at home. Teachers also record a comment once a month in relation to their guided reading. To be brought to school daily
- **A Test book:** for completing mental maths and spelling tests (children will bring home on a Friday so parents/ carers can see their child's test results but should return it the following Monday).
- **A Homework Diary:** Spelling words to be tested and focus for mental maths test will be recorded here, as will the creative / English task and online maths task
- **A homework exercise book:** for completing the weekly English / creative task where relevant. If work is completed on a worksheet or on paper, homework, children are asked to stick it in this book before returning it each Wednesday.

READING RECORD BOOKS AND HOME/SCHOOL DIARY MUST BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL DAILY.

HOW SHOULD I GIVE FEEDBACK TO THE TEACHER ON HOMEWORK TASKS MY CHILD HAS COMPLETED?

Parents/carers are requested to acknowledge and 'sign off' their child's homework by adding their initials next to the completed homework (weekly English / Maths / creative task). You are also encouraged to make a comment in their homework exercise book next to the completed task. You may wish to indicate whether they had no help or a lot of help, enjoyed the task etc. This information is

always helpful for the teacher. Please speak to your child's teacher if you have questions about any aspect of their homework or any particular concerns.

Please sign your child's home reading record book when they have read. Comments about how they got on with their reading and what page they are up to are very helpful.

If you wish to make a general comment for the teacher in relation to homework or communicate with the teacher over a non-urgent matter unrelated to homework, please do this in the homework diary. However, please note that teachers do not look at each child's homework book daily but are more likely to check it once a week. If you want the comment to be acknowledged on a given day, it is the child's responsibility to pass the diary to the class teacher and ask them to read the comment, thus encouraging their independence. Where a response is required, the teacher will record in the diary or speak to you directly. For urgent matters please arrange to meet with the teacher rather than use the homework diary.

HOW WILL MY CHILD'S HOMEWORK BE MARKED?

Class teachers will adhere to the following principles:

- All homework will be marked provided it is returned on time (sometimes just one or two aspects of the piece of work will be the focus of the marking)
- Teachers will make a note in relation to a child's guided reading once every 3 / 4 weeks in the home reading record book. This will identify areas of strength and / or suggestions of skills that need to be further developed
- Sometimes 'peer assessment' will be used to mark homework, particularly spellings and mental maths tests. This means that children will mark each other's work under the direct supervision of the teacher. In such cases, the teacher will always initial the peer marked work to confirm that they are happy with the marking completed by the child and that they have noted how well the child achieved.
- Children need to know how well they have done and what they could do better. Sometimes work will be discussed orally with the whole class or individuals in lessons as well as or instead of more detailed written marking. If a child consistently has difficulties with a piece of homework, they should discuss it with their teacher or you might wish to discuss the problem yourself.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY CHILD DOES NOT COMPLETE THEIR HOMEWORK?

WE EXPECT ALL CHILDREN TO COMPLETE THEIR HOMEWORK WEEKLY.

Whilst we actively reward children who do complete their homework, we do not sanction those who do not, as they may not have been provided with an opportunity to complete it at home or encouraged to complete it by their parent/carer. We believe that children should not be sanctioned for this reason. If your child insists, however, that they do not need to complete it or refuse to complete it, do speak to your child's teacher who will be happy to discuss the matter with your child and reiterate its importance.

The school has decided to adopt a policy of positive reinforcement. A child will automatically be awarded one house point for completing their weekly literacy/maths/creative homework to a reasonable standard each week. Two team points will be awarded for homework of a very high quality and three points for homework that is considered by the teacher to be outstanding. A child will also receive 1 house point if they get full marks for their spelling test or mental maths test.

Teachers keep a log of weekly English/Maths/creative tasks completed by each child. If a child completes this homework every single week for a term, they will be entered into a raffle which will be drawn in the end of term celebration assembly. The winner of the draw will receive a prize.

In addition to the above, some teachers also award stickers at their discretion.

HOW MUCH SHOULD I HELP MY CHILD WITH THEIR HOMEWORK?

Homework allows you to see what your child is studying and to support their learning. This partnership between school and home is a vital part of a successful education and is to be encouraged. We take the view that children are likely to get more out of an activity if parents are involved – as long as you don't take over too much or do it for them. Some children will need more help with some tasks than others and we suggest that parents respond to the needs of their child on a task by task basis. 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 help you to get the balance right.

The following tips might help:

- Read the homework task with your child and discuss what is required to ensure they (and you) understand the task fully.
- Ask some simple questions to ascertain your child's level of understanding.
- Ask your child how much help they think they need and why / agree a certain amount of time to spend on a given task
- Guide your child through the task, using questions to help them understand.
- Where research is required, help them to access safe and age appropriate websites and interpret relevant information.
- Consider helping the child to organise the materials they need and discuss how they will present their work.
- Praise and encourage your child while they are completing the task and on completion; they usually respond to this
- Read through your child's completed work with them and check they have completed the task according to the instructions.

As children move to year six, as much independence as possible should be encouraged in order to prepare them for secondary school.

WHAT IS HOMEWORK CLUB?

A weekly homework club takes place one lunchtime per week (Tuesdays from 12:05-12:35pm) and can be attended by any child who has not been able to complete their homework for a particular reason, including Mathematics. They need to remember to attend and should take their homework to the session. In particular, children will be encouraged to attend this club to complete their weekly online maths task if they do not have internet access at home.

WILL YOU SET HOMEWORK IF I TAKE MY CHILD OUT OF SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME?

The school does not promote parents/carers taking their child on holiday during term time and will not, therefore, set homework in such circumstances. If, however, a child is off school for a lengthy period of time due to illness, the teacher will work with the family to ensure that some work for completing at home / in hospital is provided.

WHO WILL MONITOR THE HOMEWORK POLICY?

This Homework policy has been ratified by the Governing Body of the school and its effectiveness will be monitored by governors regularly. The headteacher will also seek feedback from parents through the monthly Parent in Partnership meetings.

Parents/carers should also talk to the teacher if they feel any aspect of the homework policy is not being implemented as stated in the policy. If the problem is not resolved, please make an appointment to speak to the headteacher or deputy head about the matter.



HOMework POSTER FOR PARENTS

Please read the full homework policy on the school website for more detailed information about homework.

- BRING TO / FROM SCHOOL EVERY DAY**
- **Reading books x 2** (to read 15-20 minutes per night)
 - **Reading Record books** (yellow cover)
 - **homework diaries**

Day	Bring to school	Bring Home	Tests in school
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling/Maths test books (that were brought home on Friday) 		
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English / creative/maths written task in homework exercise book* (any sheets to be stuck in before returning) 		
Friday	N/B: Online Mathletics from previous week to have been completed at home	All recorded in homework diaries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Maths test focus • New Online Mathletics task focus • Spelling/Maths test book • Spelling test words (recorded in homework diaries) • English / creative / Maths written task set * (*If a worksheet is brought home it should be stuck in the homework exercise book before returning to school) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling test • Mental Maths test

-Year 6 pupils may have additional homework from spring term onwards.

.*For Year three pupils, this task is not set until after the October half term.

-**OPTIONAL homework projects** (set out in year group termly newsletters) can be completed during the holidays. Other homework is not set, (except for Y6 pupils in the spring /summer terms, where appropriate)

-Please note that there may be occasions when changes need to be made to the above schedule for different year groups e.g. due to a school trip or unforeseen circumstances. If possible, as much warning will be given (recorded in Homework Diary).

Sept 2015

Homework Hints for Parents / Carers

11 things you can do to help your child learn

1. Give your child confidence through lots of praise and encouragement throughout the process. Children thrive on feeling confident and parents are the best way to help children feel confident. Provide specific praise that focuses on a particular aspect of their work. Comments such as "I like the way you have..." is more effective than "you're clever".

2. Read to, and with, your child as much as possible.

Show them that you enjoy reading too and show interest in what they are reading. Let them read to you or read to them from time to time. Ask them their opinion about the plot, characters and layouts and justify their choices using 'why' questions as prompts.

3. Make use of your local library / Visit museums and other places you think your child might find interesting.

• *Look out for special events and services for children.*

• *Children now have free admission to major national museums and art galleries. Try finding one linked to what your child is studying. They could even help you research a place to visit.*

4. If your child likes watching television, watch it together sometimes and talk about what has been watched. Children enjoy sharing their experiences and will gain a lot from the discussion.

5. Try to provide a reasonably quiet and suitable place where your child can work and show that you and all members of the family value and respect the homework activity.

6. Try to set time aside to support your child's homework activities whilst also allowing some independence where appropriate. Agree how long you think the task should take and keep to that.

7. Encourage your child to discuss homework with you, including feedback from teachers. Discuss the requirements of the task and decide with your child how much help they will need to complete the task well.

8. Help your child to get organised, including preparation of any resources they will need. This is particularly important for younger children.

9. Try to help your child to see the enjoyable aspects of homework. Remind them of the house points they receive for completing the task. Stop if it starts to become stressful and there is danger of conflict.

10. Help your child to see the importance of homework and teach them to become more independent and take more responsibility for themselves as they get older.

11. Remind your children to complete and take responsibility for handing in homework on time.

Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns. We want your children to succeed.

