



ALTRINCHAM PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Homework Policy

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Responsible Person:	Mr Nick Vernon – Headmaster
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Introduction

This policy outlines the organisation and management of Homework at Altrincham Preparatory School. At Altrincham Preparatory School [APS] we attach much importance to the constructive use of homework. Whilst it is held to be a discipline in itself, it also forms an integral part of school work affording an opportunity for consolidation of lesson work, independent learning, research and extension to the coverage of a lesson.

Aims

Through this policy we aim to:

- provide an effective partnership between school and parents to encourage and share the boys' learning experiences
- ensure that there are clear and shared expectations between parents, the boys and the school
- ensure consistency of approach throughout the school
- to use homework as a tool to consolidate class work and support standards of attainment

By setting homework, we encourage boys to:

- make maximum progress in their academic development
- consolidate, extend and reinforce skills and learning covered in school
- develop and encourage responsibility perseverance, self-discipline and self-organisation
- enable more ground to be covered and more rapid progress to be made
- use resources and sources of information that are not accessible in the classroom, so extending school learning by, for example, research and additional reading
- work independently and develop their study skills
- develop life skills which centre around developing work habits and routine

The range of homework set includes:

- specific schemes which encourage parental involvement in helping their child with reading, mathematics activities, times tables and spelling
- prepared mathematical exercises for the consolidation of classroom learning
- creative writing and comprehension
- reasoning
- assignments in connection with topic work
- correction of previous work to ensure understanding
- reading library books, both fiction and non-fiction, for pleasure or in connection with schoolwork
- revision and learning for tests

Entitlement

All boys are entitled to homework activities that are appropriate to their needs and, therefore, staff will differentiate homework accordingly when deemed appropriate and beneficial. Through differentiation, we provide homework opportunities that enable all boys to make good progress and reinforce prior learning. We strive hard to meet the needs of those boys with special educational needs, disabilities, those with special gifts and talents and those for whom English is an additional language. For further information, please refer to the Disability, Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Learning Support Policy.

All boys are expected to participate in homework activities.

Equal Opportunities

In line with our Equal Opportunities Policy, we are committed to providing homework which supports, extends and reinforces learning. Each boy is valued, respected and challenged regardless of religion, race, background, culture or disability.

Planning the homework

Early Years Foundation Stage

There will be no formal homework in Pre-school. However, staff will ask parents to support their sons in the prime areas of learning:

- Communication & Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The School will give guidance to parents as to how they can do this through workshops and others forms of communication.

In Reception, the first term's homework will focus solely on reading and comprehension skills. During the Spring term, as the beginning of the transition to Year 1, Reception boys will be set activity-based homework once per week, which will consolidate prior learning.

Pre-Prep: Years 1 and 2

Year 1 and Year 2 homework is sent home twice a week, on a Monday and a Wednesday. Monday homework should be handed in by Wednesday and Wednesday homework by Friday. Each Friday, online Athletics activities will be set. Spellings are set each Friday for a test the following Friday.

Reading should be carried out at home every day, for at least 10 minutes, with the boy reading aloud and being listened to by a parent / guardian. The adult should then write in the boy's Reading Record to confirm that they have read, making any comments needed for the teacher to see.

There may be occasional weekend homework that will be topic based, but this will not be a weekly occurrence until the final half term of Year 2, in preparation for transition to Prep. Similarly, Homework Diaries will be introduced in the Summer of Year 2, to support boys' transition to Prep.

Prep: Years 3 - 6

Homework is set according to the year group's homework allocation (below), and all tasks set have clear time frames for completion.

For Years 3/4, homework will be recorded by hand in the boys' Homework Logs/Diaries. Parents are required to initial the homework diaries to show they have seen their son's homework activity.

In Years 5 and 6, homework will not necessarily be returned the following day. To help boys develop the appropriate organisational skills required for their transition into senior school, staff may vary the number of days allocated to complete given tasks (encouraging ongoing, lengthier homework tasks to be completed over multiple nights). Therefore, it will be at the discretion of the class teachers as to when the homework is returned (as long as, ultimately, the time allocation has been applied).

For Years 5 and 6, all homework instructions will be posted on Google Classroom. Homework tasks will cover a spread of subjects at the discretion of the Class Teacher, who will use their professional judgement to choose appropriate homework tasks that respond to the needs and interests of the boys on any given day. Homework tasks will therefore be chosen based on the value in the homework task itself, rather than following a rigid task structure. They should cover a range of skills, including research and retrieval, note-taking, summarising, drafting, use of evidence, collecting information, revision, rote learning, presenting information, making and creating, ICT, problem solving and evaluation.

Holiday homework is also given as appropriate. Transitional homework will be set at the end of each academic year, to help prepare boys for their next class.

For boys in Prep, reading should be carried out at home every day for at least twenty minutes. In Year 3, boys are expected to read their school reading book; whereas, in Years 4, 5 and 6, boys will read a book of their choice (free reading).

Recommended Time Allocations

Homework should never be too onerous, nor should it create stress within the boy's family. The following guidance is given for daily homework activities:

PS/Reception 10-15 minutes

Years 1 and 2 20 minutes

Year 3 up to 20 minutes (3 times a week – Mon, Weds, Fri)

Year 4 up to 30 minutes (4 times a week)

Year 5 up to 40 minutes (5 times a week)

Year 6 up to 50 minutes (5 times a week)

It is acknowledged that it is difficult to set time limits for homework. Some boys will do homework in a few minutes (and do it well); others will take longer, while a few may appear to struggle interminably. Class teachers have a very good knowledge of each boy's ability in their class and will set homework relevant to the child. The school expects all boys to endeavour to complete the homework set. If they are struggling, then the most likely causes are that they do not understand the requirement or the work is too difficult without teacher support. Whatever the case, parents should check with the teacher the next day and a boy should not be required to carry on beyond a period of time deemed reasonable by their parents. If homework is done quickly, the teacher should be informed with reading or complementary work being undertaken. A note in the homework diary, for either case, is helpful. The idea is to make homework, productive, useful and stimulating.

General

Where appropriate, homework will be marked by Class Teachers and returned to the boys; however, where appropriate, homework will be marked in class, with the boys, and verbal feedback will be given. Class Teachers will use their professional judgement as to when to use verbal or written feedback, based on what is most beneficial to the boys' learning and next steps.

All boys are assigned a Google account and allocated to their class Google Classroom. Homework will be set regularly on Google Classroom (as appropriate for the age of the boys).

If boys are absent due to illness, staff will not send homework home as it is assumed that the boy is too ill to work. If a boy is absent for a length of time e.g. with a broken leg, recovering from an operation or has to take any long term authorised absence from school, the teacher and parent will agree what should be done, how the work will be marked and what sort of help needs to be given. In such circumstances, the teacher should consult with the appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team.

We are not obliged to provide homework when parents take holidays in term time.

Parents who have queries about homework should not hesitate to make an appointment to see their son's class teacher.

Reporting to Parents

Reports are written for parents during the academic year.

Individual comments may be made by the class teacher which highlights the boys' achievements in homework activities, areas for development, consistency in the quality of homework received and regular success in weekly spelling and mathematics tests.

Monitoring and Review

The overall responsibility for the Homework Policy rests with the Deputy Headteacher (Academic) and Headmaster. The Deputy Headteacher (Academic) and Headmaster, in consultation with the wider Senior Leadership Team, will review the policy on an annual basis.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role of the Class Teacher

- to ensure at the start of each year, parents are fully informed and aware of how homework is being managed within the year group and what the procedures and expectations are
- to provide an explanation of homework tasks to parents when necessary and give guidance of how they might assist their child. This may be done by a note with the work
- to set up regular homework in an easily followed routine.
- to ensure that homework is set consistently across classes in the cohort or Phase.
- to set homework that takes equal and racial opportunities into account.
- to ensure any homework is purposeful and links directly to the curriculum being taught.
- to reward and praise boys who regularly complete homework and particularly those who go the extra mile
- to mark homework and provide feedback to pupils as necessary

Role of the Headmaster, Deputy Headteacher (Academic) and Governing Body

- to check compliance of the Policy.
- to meet and talk with parents when appropriate.
- to discuss with staff how far the policy is being successfully implemented.
- to inform new parents to the school so that they are aware of the homework expectations and what it entails.

Role of Parents/Carers

- to sign homework activities, [including reading diaries] or Homework Logs/Diaries on a weekly basis, as necessary and appropriate for the year group
- to support the school by ensuring that their son attempts all homework tasks and encourages high standards.
- to provide a suitable place for their son to carry out their homework.
- to encourage and praise their son when they have completed their homework.
- to become actively involved and support their son with homework activities.
- to make it clear that they value homework and they support the school by explaining how it can help learning.
- ensure that if homework is not done for whatever reason, a letter is sent to the class or subject teacher giving a brief explanation.

Senior Leadership Team

Senior Leaders with phase group responsibility are responsible for raising standards in their phase by:

- ensuring that the policy is implemented
- advising the Headmaster of INSET needs within their phase
- advising colleagues about effective homework strategies
- monitoring the homework books and activities through work and planning scrutiny