Homework Policy

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Values Statement

The Governors and staff of Thames Ditton Junior School believe that homework is an important aspect of a child’s education. We believe it encourages children to realise that learning can take place outside the classroom as well as promoting independent learning thus encouraging the child to take great responsibility for their personal progress.

Homework is a contentious issue. There are some parents who believe the more homework, the better, while others feel that all work should be completed at school and at home children should be able to play, relax and do activities of their choice.

We believe that homework allows parents, carers and the school, to work in partnership for the benefit of their child. Homework should be a positive support to learning and never become a source of conflict between a child and their parent.

Purpose of Homework

Through this policy we aim to:

- Ensure consistency of approach throughout the school
- Ensure progression towards independence and individual responsibility
- Ensure the needs of the individual pupil are taken into account
- Ensure parents/guardians have a clear understanding about expectations of themselves and their children
- Extend and support the learning experience via reinforcement and revision
- Provide opportunities for parents, pupils and school to work in partnership
- Provide opportunities for parents and pupils to work together to enjoy learning experiences
- Prepare children for secondary education
- Give parents more information regarding the curriculum and their child’s
As children get older, homework provides an opportunity to develop the skills of independent learning. It is important that children should gradually become accustomed to regularly devoting periods of time, which may not be long, to study on their own.

**Type and Amount of Homework**

Homework is set most often to practise skills previously learnt in the classroom, for instance, if children had been learning about equivalent fractions, then a maths homework sheet on the same subject would be relevant.

It will also be set to practise specific skills (e.g. spelling, multiplication facts). Only occasionally is homework set in preparation for a lesson (e.g. what can children find out about the food that Ancient Egyptians ate, should zoos be banned - prepare arguments both in favour and against etc).

There is no longer a government stipulation about the amount of work set, but we still give guidance that pupils in Years 3 and 4 should receive one and a half hours and those in years 5 and 6, two and a half hours.

Pupils will be allowed at least two nights to complete tasks and should be able to complete them in the time allocated.

Similarly, if a task is taking longer than the period indicated, parents are asked to use their discretion. If parents are satisfied that their child has given the work his best effort during the prescribed time, the task should be left unfinished and supported by writing a brief note on the homework. However, if the child is happy to work on longer and complete a task it would be helpful to know the length of time it has taken him/her. Again, this could be done by writing a brief note on the homework sheet.

Where there is no reasonable excuse, an extra day should be allowed and if not completed, the work should be done at break time.

Homework assignments cease to be set in the last week before the end of each term and during assessment week.

**Reading**

For younger children, it is tremendously important that they read with or to an older family member; the story and characters should be talked about and new words discussed.
This interaction will help develop and sharpen reading skills. As children get older, they should be encouraged to read independently. This does not have to be confined to fiction texts as reading for information is also extremely valuable. We would hope that reading for pleasure is valued at all times and is not just confined to the total time spent completing homework.

**Multiplication Facts**

It is important that children are able to recall multiplication tables rapidly and therefore there will be homework set regularly to learn these and to be tested on them. There is a greater emphasis on the need to know these within the National Curriculum which makes clear that Year 4 children will know their tables up to and including 12x12. There are many apps and websites that can make tables homework fun and interactive!

**Spellings**

Children are taught spelling within their own class. A homework task will be set each week to learn the correct spelling of words from the spelling pattern that has been learnt and from relevant/topic words assigned by the class teacher. Each week children will be tested on a selection of those words that have been learnt. We recommend the (Look-Say-Cover-Write) approach as the best method to use. Our spelling curriculum is No-Nonsense Spellings. There are many apps and websites that can make spellings homework fun and interactive!

**Mathematics**

A weekly task that is linked to the work being done in school or a problem-solving investigation will be set. This task may also include activities set from an educational study book differentiated for each year group’s maths curriculum. Where study book tasks are set, pupils will be encouraged to mark answers together in class. This will mean that no formal teacher comment will appear on the homework page.

**English**

An English task will be set week. Examples of literacy homework would be a comprehension exercise, a discussion topic or a story beginning. On occasions this homework may not require any formal writing.

**Projects**
Year Group teachers will set a project for the summer term. This will have a specific focus. It may be historical, literary, geographical, scientific, mathematical or artistic. In fact it can cover any aspect of the year group curriculum. It may include written work and illustrations and is likely to be of a more practical nature for younger children. They will be required to research and investigate the task in order to complete it. Research can be done at home or in libraries. It can be through books and the Internet. These tasks will broaden the learning that children undertake. The time taken to complete the work can be flexibly organised at home over the term. Children will be required to present the completed tasks for assessment towards the end of each half term.

**The Role of Parents and Carers in Supporting Pupils**

Parents and carers should:

- Provide a reasonably peaceful, suitable place in which pupils can do their homework

- Negotiate with their child the most appropriate time, during an evening or a weekend, to undertake homework assignments

- Check with their child that they have the resources necessary to complete a particular homework task

- Ensure that the child explains what they have to do as a means of checking their understanding

- Make it clear to children that they value homework, and support the school in explaining how it can help their learning

- Encourage children to ‘have a go’ and praise them when they have completed homework

We want to achieve a balance between parents supporting their children with homework, but also allowing them to do independently.
The Role of Teachers

Teachers will:

- Set appropriate work

- Value the work completed by the child and support given by parents

- Ensure that all work set by the school is used to inform next steps in teaching

- Ensure that all work is completed by pupils; if it is not done teachers may in certain circumstances allow extra time or may require pupils to complete it at playtime. If this continues to happen the class teacher will contact the pupil’s parents to find out if there are reasons why this is happening

- All homework will be marked in some way as it is important that children receive feedback on the task that they have undertaken e.g. review into next steps in teaching, peer marking, use of visualiser etc

The Role of Pupils

Pupils will:

- Organise themselves to take home necessary books and equipment required to fulfil a task

- Care for their homework books and sheets

- Always carry out and present work to the best of their ability

- Complete their homework and hand it in on time