



Learning at Home

Homework Policy 2024

At Willow Brook we believe that children's learning is strongly influenced by the home. Your interest and involvement in your child's learning and education stands alongside our teaching in helping your child fulfil their potential.

We recognise that there are differing opinions on homework during the primary years. It is our aim that homework is achievable, appropriate to the pupil's level of ability and, above all, a worthwhile, shared experience. By spending time helping your child, you will provide them with a role model, showing that you appreciate learning and recognise that learning is important for both children and adults alike. A realistic amount of set homework not only supports a child's learning but also enables parents to gain a greater understanding of the curriculum and the progress their child is making.

We recognise that children also need time to pursue their own interests and homework should never get in the way of or replace the many activities that children enjoy doing after school. We fully realise that we have some exceptionally busy children here at Willow Brook who gain so much from the varied activities they participate in.

Our Approach to the Setting of Homework

Reception, Years 1 and 2

Reading Records

A strong emphasis is placed upon reading at this age. Wherever possible, try to share a book with your child for a short time each day. This could be listening to your child read to you, but also your child listening to you read stories to them, even when they are in years 5 and 6 this is an important element in their education. Comprehending and engaging with a story is as important as sounding out individual words. Asking questions and talking about the pictures builds excellent inference skills.

In EYFS and Year 1 reading books are matched to the phonics being studied in class. Your child's school book(s) will not be changed every day, but this does not mean that they cannot share the same book more than once. Children love to reread stories they have enjoyed, and as they become more familiar with a story, they develop the skill of reading with expression – especially if they hear you read the same stories to them. Children's sight vocabulary of those common 'tricky words' also improves as they see the same ones repeatedly. Also, let children have a go at reading books from home too – they do not only have to read their school book. Going to the library and choosing their own books is also a super way of encouraging a love of books. You can let us know everything they have been reading by recording it in their record book.

Book bags and reading folders are part of the Willow Brook uniform and should be with your child every day.

Whatever their age, reading is the bedrock of learning, and you can never do too much!

Homework books

Children in classes R, 1 and 2 will bring home their homework book each week. This will contain a short activity which supports their learning in class and could be based on their work in English or maths. The task will be carefully explained by the teacher.

Spellings and Phonics

Children will also bring home a task related to their phonics or spelling work each week. Children in year 2 work more closely with high frequency words and will have sentence writing tasks to complete.

When the school is engaged in whole-school topics, children will also be set creative home tasks that relate to the work they are covering at school. Children are proud to complete and exhibit these tasks and we encourage the whole family to get involved.

Years 3, 4, 5 and 6

Reading Records

There continues to be an emphasis on reading as the children move through the juniors, and we continue to hope that children are engaging with their books every day. All children have age-appropriate reading record books to keep track of work being done at home as well as recording the reading they do at school.

Spelling booklets

In addition to reading, each week children will be set a spelling task based on their language lesson. Each child is given a spelling booklet at the beginning of the year which explains the process and tasks. Teachers will explain strategies to help you engage with the patterns and peculiarities of English vocabulary. Short sentence writing tasks that explore context and meaning are also included. Each class will have a weekly spelling test and the children will be able to share their progress with their parents.

Homework books

Children in classes 3, 4, 5 and 6 will also bring home a homework book once a week. This will cover English and maths content that has been taught. Children in Years 5 and 6 will be set a piece of maths and a piece of grammar each week. From time to time, children may also be set foundation subject home projects or research tasks that relate to the topics they are covering at school.

There may be weeks where no homework is set. An example of this could be during our school performance week or after residential, which are busy and demanding weeks enough!

Communication between parents and teachers is vital. Whilst we encourage a positive attitude to completing homework, if you feel that your child has done enough or if they found something a little too difficult then please let the teacher know. Any information you can provide us with will be useful – for example you could let us know whether your child completed the task independently or whether they needed a little support. Whilst we recognise that homework encourages a discipline and routine, we never want it to become a battle. Again, discuss this with us.

Enjoying Homework and Encouraging Creativity

We very much want to encourage creativity and independent learning and we always welcome any additional projects that children want to do at home. If your child is motivated by a topic or theme and wishes to create something based upon that, then we love showcasing what they do. This enables children to work to their strengths – painting or drawing, model making, writing or creating a computer presentation to share independent research... the list is endless! Each half term, you should receive a Creative Curriculum Plan from your child's class teacher. This explains the content of the half term ahead and might help you to guide and give them the inspiration they need.

Whole school topics will encourage whole school home activities and projects. These may include creative writing, independent research, preparing for debates or producing art for exhibitions. Wherever possible, we aim to showcase this work to parents.

Teachers will always make time to allow children to share their hard work with the rest of the class and celebrate their efforts. We encourage children to share their out of school achievements and learning, allowing time in assemblies to share medals and certificates and opportunities to perform and develop talents in music and drama.

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