



KILLERMONT PRIMARY SCHOOL HOMEWORK STRATEGY JANUARY 2020



INTRODUCTION

A major review of homework procedures was carried out during 2018. This involved consultation with all stakeholders and extensive discussion with Pupil and Parent Councils.

Research from The Education Endowment Foundation was considered and the need to strike a balance between providing homework that would fit into the busy lives of families in the Killermont community while still supporting and enhancing pupil achievement by encouraging consolidation of skills, effort and thinking about their learning.

It was agreed that homework would be set over a two-week block. Allowing time to balance homework against other out of school activities, clubs and family time.

Homework will not be set in the months of August, December, April or June.

Details of dates for homework being set and returned will be shared at the beginning of each term.

AIMS

Within Killermont Primary, the purpose of homework is to

- provide an opportunity for children to consolidate, reflect and build upon their learning in the classroom
- develop children's ability to plan and organise their work, developing self-discipline, routines and study skills
- enable parents and others to participate in their child's learning, providing a link between home and school and promote discussion of the Killermont Learning Powers

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF TEACHERS, CHILDREN AND PARENTS?

Teachers should:

- Set varied homework to reflect the needs of the class
- Explain tasks clearly
- Organise for the marking of homework and feedback to pupils about the tasks
- Monitor the progress of the children

Children should:

- Complete homework tasks as specified on time
- Ensure the same level of effort and presentation as would be expected of class learning

Parents should:

- Be active in supporting their child's learning eg pacing of homework over the block, we recommend short focussed slots
- Ensure there are suitable working conditions at home eg not in front of the television
- Inform the teacher if there are any reasons why homework cannot be completed on time
- Check the tasks and sign

If homework causes your child to become stressed, please leave the task until another time and contact the teacher if it persists.

HOW MUCH HELP SHOULD PARENTS GIVE CHILDREN?

In general, parents should support their child in allowing them to complete their homework tasks so that work produced is the child's own.

Many parents are often unsure about whether or not to correct homework, especially numeracy and spelling. Parents should look over completed work and encourage children to check the quality of presentation and to look for any mistakes. Hopefully the child will find and correct any errors, though if parents feel that a child has seriously misunderstood a task, then it would be best to contact the teacher.

In school we talk a lot with the children about Growth Mindset and how they have to exercise their brain to help it grow. We also use the equation of time + effort + practice = success. This can be applied to homework too, helping our children to challenge themselves. In addition Our Learning Powers (see attached) will help parents to discuss positive learning dispositions with their children during homework tasks.

HOW MUCH HOMEWORK SHOULD BE GIVEN?

Research suggests if homework is used as a short and focussed intervention it can be effective in improving student attainment. When asking 'how much homework', one tends to mean 'how much time' should the tasks take. It has been said a good way to think about the homework is the way you think about medications (Cooper 2015) 'If you take too little, they'll have no effect. If you take too much. They can make you ill. If you take the right amount, you'll get better'. The table below is based on what the teacher could reasonably expect of most children.

| Stage | Approximate Time |
|--------|---------------------------------|
| P1 - 2 | 1 hour per fortnightly block |
| P3 - 4 | 1.5 hours per fortnightly block |
| P5 - 6 | 2 hours per fortnightly block |
| P7 | 2.5 hours per fortnightly block |

Although we will endeavour to set homework regularly and consistently, there may be occasions when this is not possible. This may be due to a variety of reasons eg the unexpected absence of the teacher, the school/class timetable being changed unexpectedly.

WHAT KIND OF TASKS WILL BE SET?

Homework tasks should be set appropriately, reflecting ongoing class work based around the curriculum:

- Health & Wellbeing
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Social Studies
- Sciences
- Technologies
- Expressive Arts
- Religious & Moral Education

Homework takes many forms and will focus on the development and application of skills eg researching, designing, gathering information as well as practice eg tables, spelling, reading.

Parents should expect at least **2** areas of the curriculum to be set for homework each block. Homework may differ from week to week depending on work being covered in class and the needs of the children.

Children will not be given learning home until they have been taught the concept or skill in class. Necessary resources to complete a set task eg an art task, will be provided by the school.

INFORMATION ON SPECIFIC TASKS

Spelling is a combination of learning to spell common words and spelling lists based on phonics then spelling rules.

The LOOK-SAY-COVER-WRITE-CHECK a multi-sensory approach is the spelling strategy encouraged in school

- *Looking* helps learners to see the whole shape and supports the visual element
- *Saying* the word links it with language, so learners relate the spoken word with its written form
- *Covering* before writing the word ensures that it is written from memory and never copied
- *Checking* the written word makes learners look again (read it) and helps to commit the word to memory

Sumdog – an online numeracy website will sometimes be used for tasks, children can use their login to access this at anytime. Research has proven that pupils who regularly use this (about 1 hour per week) have shown marked improvement in their numeracy proficiency.

WILL HOMEWORK BE THE SAME FOR EVERY CHILD IN THE CLASS?

Sometimes children learn in ability groups in class and homework tasks will often be differentiated to reflect the work of their particular group.

Differentiation of tasks ensures that children work at a level best suited to them and at the most appropriate pace. Individuals may also have specific homework set to best suit their needs.

SHARED LEARNING

Each session pupils will complete a shared learning activities sheet. This approach supports some of the Principles of Curriculum for Excellence:

- Personalisation and Choice
- Challenge and Enjoyment

The sheet details a range of possible activities, children and parents then agree a minimum of three tasks per block to be completed. Completed tasks should be brought into school to be shared with classmates.

Empty boxes are there for parents/children to design tasks that interest them.

During Shared Learning Primary 1-2 pupils will continue to have reading work set by the teacher. Other children should be encouraged to read for enjoyment using text of their own choice during this time.

READING FOR ENJOYMENT

Reading is a crucial element to a child's success and overall wellbeing.

Research shows that reading for just 10 minutes a day can have a massive impact on a child's education, helping them to achieve good exam results and equip them with the skills to thrive in the adult world.

At Primary 6 and 7 pupils will be working on their Reading Challenges at Bronze, Silver and Gold.

HANDING IN HOMEWORK

Homework is a voluntary task and cannot be compulsory. We recognise that some parents do not wish their children to have homework. If any parents wish to withdraw their children from homework activities, they should inform the child's teacher in writing.

For children participating in home learning activities, we expect completed homework to be handed in on time. This gives children valuable experience of working to a deadline/sharing resources and facilitates staff with their planning and marking schedules.