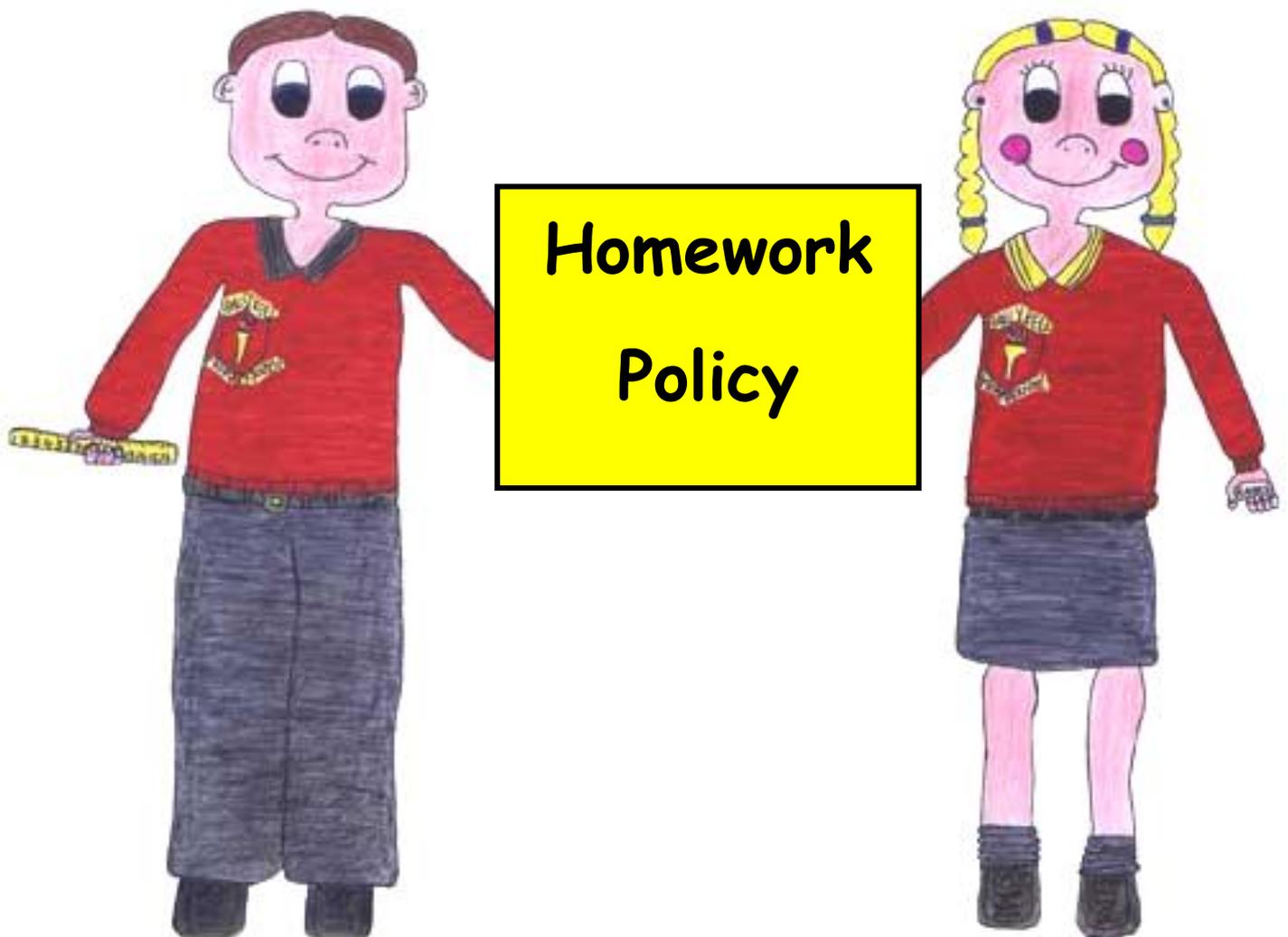


# BALLYKEEL PRIMARY SCHOOL



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## **HOMEWORK POLICY**

### **Introduction**

In order that our pupils can attain the highest standards, spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and academically, we recognise the crucial importance of an active educational partnership between home and school. Homework is just one of the ways in which we seek to foster this partnership.

Homework can make an important contribution to a child's progress in school. It is important at all stages in a child's education and, when used properly, can extend the learning opportunities for children and improve standards of learning in the school.

### **Aims of This Policy**

- To provide guidance for teachers, parents/carers and pupils.
- To ensure consistency of practice throughout the school.
- To reinforce the quality of learning offered to pupils.
- To encourage the Home/School Partnership.
- To aid progression towards independent learning.

### **Purpose of Homework**

To:

- Encourage pupils to develop the skills, confidence and motivation needed to study effectively on their own and with parental support.
- As a useful point of contact between the school and parents/carers and as a means of involving parents in their children's education and progress.
- Consolidate and reinforce the skills, knowledge and understanding developed at school.
- Extend school learning in terms of time, variety and range of activities.
- Sustain the involvement of parents/carers in the management of pupils' learning, and keep them informed about the work pupils are doing.
- Complete tasks undertaken in school.
- Prepare for further work in class or specific activities e.g. Tests.
- Train pupils in planning and organising their work, developing self-discipline and good habits such as time management skills and basic study techniques which will support them in future education and beyond.

## Types and Amount of Homework

In our school, the main focus is on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding particularly in Literacy and Numeracy. As the child progresses through the school other areas of learning will be added as and when required.

### **How often is homework given?**

- Formal homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays but not on Fridays.
- There are exceptions:  
If homework has been neglected/not completed during the week.  
In senior classes some project or preparatory work can be undertaken at weekends.
- Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the Principal, children are given “homework off” as a reward for good behaviour or as acknowledgement of some special occasion.
- If a child has not done homework, made a suitable effort or presented untidy work, it may be completed during morning break-time, lunch-time or the following night.
- If a child persistently fails to do homework parents/carers will be informed and the work may have to be completed in school during some specially liked activity.

### **What is the content of homework?**

- Ideally homework will contain a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and written tasks, however it should be noted that homework time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work.
- The writing involved in written homework should be kept to a minimum if possible.
- Homework will regularly contain reading, spellings, tables, written work, and on occasions pieces to be “learned by heart”, drawing/colouring, collecting information/items, research and finishing work started in class.
- Children often feel that reading and “learning by heart” is not real homework. Parents/carers can play an important role in listening to reading and items to be learned thus ensuring this work is done well.

Children must have time to take part in family life and in appropriate leisure and recreational activities. Homework should, therefore, not take up a disproportionate amount of the child’s time. Recommended times for each year group are given below, it being recognized that these are for an “average” child. Most children are not average, and depending on a child’s ability or speed of working, many are likely to take less or more time than others.

P1	10 – 15 minutes.
P2	15 – 20 minutes.
P3	20 – 30 minutes.
P4	30 minutes.
P5	30 – 40 minutes.
P6	30 – 45 minutes.
P7	45 – 90 minutes

## **Literacy Homework**

Literacy will be integrated into the general homework framework of the school. Assignments in talking and listening, reading and writing will reflect the classroom practice and be used as a method of reinforcement of prepared work.

Year 1 – From November, reading and jolly phonics every night. Handwriting three times per week. Literacy homework in Home Learning Book every other week.

Year 2 – Reading every night. One written homework every week alternating literacy/ numeracy. Common and tricky words flash cards. Spellings start after Christmas.

Years 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 – Reading and spellings daily. Written homework each Monday.

A written homework should not take any longer than:

15 minutes for Years 1

20 minutes for Years 2 and 3

30 minutes for Years 4 and 5

45 minutes for Years 6 and 7

## **Numeracy Homework**

Numeracy will be integrated in the general homework framework of the school.

Year 1 - Work in Home Learning Book every other week.

Year 2 – One written homework every week alternating literacy/ numeracy. Practical maths games in term one. Practical maths activities in term two on numeracy homework week. Addition and subtraction tables after Christmas.

Year 3 – Addition and subtraction tables daily. Quick recall of number facts. Written homework each Wednesday.

Year 4 – Tables (addition and subtraction followed later in the year by multiplication). Quick recall of number facts. Written homework each Wednesday.

Years 5, 6 and 7 – Tables (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, conversion of units). Quick recall of mathematical facts. Mental arithmetic linked to current topic. Written homework each Wednesday.

A written homework should not take any longer than:

15 minutes for Year 1

20 minutes for Years 2 and 3

30 minutes for Years 4 and 5

45 minutes for Years 6 and 7

On Tuesdays, P.3 to P.7 children do a practical on-line learning activity

## **Other Written Homework**

There may be occasions when teachers wish to set children homeworks in other curricular areas such as The World Around Us, or those done through Education City. In such circumstances the time allocation will be similar to that for Literacy and Numeracy.

## **Long Term Absence**

Children who are off sick for a prolonged period (over 2 days) can have homework sent home. This must be requested by the parent.

If a parent/carer chooses to remove his/her child/children from school, including to go on holiday, work will not be provided.

## **The Responsibilities of Teachers, Pupils and Parents/Carers**

### Teachers will ensure that:

- Homework is an integral part of the curriculum and is planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of learning.
- Homework is appropriate to the age, ability and circumstances of the pupils, taking into account special education needs.
- They give clear and precise instructions to children as to what is required for homework.
- They will insist that homework should be neat and tidy and that books and materials be kept clean.
- Homework will be monitored regularly, marked before return, and appropriate feedback given.
- They give recognition and praise for effort and work well done.
- They have realistically high expectations of pupils completing homework.
- They will not give homeworks during weekends or holidays.\*
- They will not give written homeworks in the months of June and December\*

\*unless sitting the transfer test.

### Pupils will:

- Record and ensure their understanding of the homework tasks.
- Demonstrate a commitment to spending an allocated time doing the set tasks to the highest standard and handing the work back on time.
- Take appropriate care of homework resources.
- Seek help and support from the class teacher or another adult if necessary.

### Parents/Carers will:

- Endeavour to provide pupils with a quiet, suitable space in which to complete homework tasks.
- Encourage and support their children by, for example, listening to reading and asking spellings and tables. Parents/carers should not do homework for their children. If a child is genuinely unable to do his/her task after having made a reasonable effort, this may be explained in a letter to the child's teacher or a comment in the homework book or diary.
- Sign and monitor all homework.

- Contact the class teacher if there are concerns about a homework task.
- Adhere to the methods used in school, particularly in Numeracy.
- Display a positive attitude to homework and give praise and support where appropriate.

### **Pupils with Special Educational Needs**

We set homework for all children as a normal part of school life. We ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to the ability of the child. If a child has special needs, we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way. For those children who are in regular withdrawal support, the teacher withdrawing will set the homework.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

Homework setting and completion will be monitored on a regular basis by relevant co-ordinators and the Principal. The implementation of this policy will be the responsibility of class teachers and, ultimately, the Principal and the Board of Governors.

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