

# Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Hael

## Policy on Homework

### Introduction

Homework is anything children do outside the normal school day that contributes to their learning, in response to guidance from the school. Homework encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents to support the children's learning. For example, parents who spend time reading stories to their children before bedtime are helping with homework.

### Rationale for homework

Homework is a very important part of a child's education, and can add much to a child's development. We recognise that the educational experience that any school by itself can provide is limited by the time and resources available; children can therefore benefit greatly from the complementary learning that they do at home. Indeed, we see homework as an important example of cooperation between teachers and parents. One of the aims of our teaching is for children to develop as independent learners, and we believe that doing homework is one of the main ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning.

Homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. However, we also acknowledge the important role of play and free time in a child's growth and development. While homework is important, it should not prevent children from taking part in the activities of various out-of-school clubs and of other organisations that play an important part in the lives of our pupils. We are well aware that children spend more time at home than at school, and we believe that they develop their interests and skills to the full only when parents encourage them to make maximum use of the opportunities available outside school.

### Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of homework are:

- to enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development;
- to help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner;
- to promote cooperation between home and school in supporting each child's learning;
- to enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered in sufficient depth;
- to provide educational experiences not possible in school;
- to enable children to take control of, actively engage with and take pride in their own learning;
- to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school and to allow children to practice skills taught in lessons;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future.

### Types of homework

Staff and pupils regard homework as an integral part of the curriculum – it is planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of learning.

We set a variety of homework activities. In the Foundation Phase, we give children books to take home and read/enjoy with their parents. We give guidance to parents on achieving the maximum benefit from this time spent reading with their child. In addition, we also supplement this with number and word work for Year 1 and 2 children. Sometimes, we ask children to talk about a topic at home prior to studying it in school eg in the history topic on toys, we ask children to find out what toys were popular when their grandparents were young, and, if possible, to bring examples into school to show the other children. Sometimes, we ask children to find and collect things that we then use in science lessons, and occasionally we ask children to take home work that they have started in school, when we believe that they could benefit from spending further time on it. When we ask children to study a topic, or to research a particular subject, we encourage them to use not only the school library but also the local library, as well as research the Internet and CD-ROMs.

We implement "**Brain Builders**" homework throughout school.

This new approach to homework allows children a choice of what work to do at home, and encourages them to be as creative as possible.

- The Learning Objective(s) will be clearly stated and linked to the learning happening in the classroom.
- Some suggested activities and ways to approach the task will be offered – this will be at a level that reflects the age and needs of the individual child.
- The aim of this work is to encourage our children to become more independent learners, be motivated in their own learning and also to enable them to make links in their learning.
- There will be opportunities during school time to review, share and discuss Brain Builder tasks.

The class teacher will set homework that is appropriate to the age of the child. It is vital that parents/carers are involved in this work with their child, for it to succeed.

Brain builders homework is issued on Fridays and children are requested to complete the work by the following Wednesday, although they can hand it in early.

At Key Stage 2, we continue to give children the sort of homework activities outlined above, but we expect them to do more tasks independently. We set literacy and numeracy homework routinely each week, and we expect the children to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school through practise at home. We also set homework as a means of ensuring that prior learning has been understood.

Homework is marked according to the general school marking policy. Homework completed well is acknowledged and praised. There may be issues arising from the work, which the teacher will follow up in lesson time.

We recognise that children have individual learning styles, which means that some tasks can be completed in a number of different ways, while others demand a particular approach.

### **Inclusion and homework**

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, and we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way. We value and celebrate the cultural diversity of our pupils and their families, and we appreciate the enrichment that this brings.

### **The role of parents**

Parents have a vital role to play in their child's education, and homework is an important part of this process. We ask parents to encourage their child to complete the homework tasks that are set. We invite them to help their children as and when they feel it necessary, and to provide them with the sort of environment that allows children to do their best. Parents can support their child by providing a good working space at home, by enabling their child to visit the library regularly, and by discussing the work that their child is doing. Parents should not however, complete the work themselves!

We ask parents to check their "Brain builders" book and reading record, and sign as requested.

If parents have any questions about homework, they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher. If their questions are of a more general nature, they should contact the Headteacher.

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of our Governing Body to agree and then monitor the school homework policy. This is done by the committee of the governing body that deals with curriculum issues.

This policy will be reviewed in 2014.