



Stretton Sugwas Academy

Homework Policy

Reviewed: Summer 2016

Mr Ben Ford

Introduction: What Is Homework?

The link between home and school is hugely influential in the progress of a child. At Stretton Sugwas C of E Academy, we view homework as an important part of developing home-school links as well as helping a child to make progress. Put simply: homework can make a positive impact on a child's progress in school.

Homework refers to all of the teacher-directed work that is to be attempted in the home setting.

This document will provide information on homework expectations at Stretton Sugwas: what is expected of parents/carers and what parents/carers can expect from school.

Key Beliefs: What Do We Believe At Stretton Sugwas?

Homework at Stretton Sugwas is underpinned by three key beliefs.

The first key belief is that: homework must be relevant and support the learning taking place in school. This means that any work set by teachers will link closely to what is done in class. It also means that children will not be given tasks that they do not possess the skills or knowledge to attempt and complete.

The second key belief is: the quality of child's work is more important than the quantity. At Stretton Sugwas, we understand the necessary role that adults play in guiding children to make the right choices and work at a higher standard. We acknowledge that parents will have differing philosophies and demands on time, affecting their role in the homework process.

Parents have two options with regards to how they ensure the quality of their child's work: the "shadow" or the "checker". The shadow approach is where adults work alongside the children, guiding them to make the right choices for themselves. The checker approach is where more independent children use the adult to look over their work once it has been completed.

Finally, the third belief is that: the children's best is always good enough. At Stretton Sugwas, we acknowledge that, although not all children will want to do homework, all adults play a role in helping children to see the purpose of it: to show off what they know and practise their skills.

The homework should, as much as possible, give children a choice how to show off their skills as well as allowing them to adapt tasks to their interests for increased enjoyment. We believe that this is important in helping children to develop into self-disciplined and self-motivated learners. In order to help achieve this, we encourage parents to model positive attitudes towards learning, challenge and study.

Structure: What Does Homework Look Like At Stretton Sugwas?

In Phases 1 and 2 (Years 1 to 6), homework is given to parents/carers in the form of a class *Homework Menu*. These are made available to parents at the start of each term/half-term, depending on particular class routines. The menu is so-called as it reflects the important motivational element of choice. An example of such a menu can be seen in Appendix 1.

The Homework Menu should give a variety of options for children/ parents/ carers to choose. The options on the menu are split into two food-themed sections: *5 A-Day* and *Weekly Treats*.

5-A-Day refers to the essential daily activities, such as reading or spellings, which children should do in frequent short bursts. These are “the basics” and are the most important part of homework. This is the minimum expectation of homework at Stretton Sugwas. Weekly Treats are more creative activities, such as making models or artwork. These are limited to a maximum of one per week, so that they do not overshadow the need to work on the basics.

The content of the Homework Menu will support a range of curriculum areas but will be dominated by English and Maths. Children are allowed to come up with their own homework ideas *if* they support what they are learning in class.

Additional homework options may be given by class teachers as appropriate. There will also be regular updates of the Home-School Support page of the school website with alternative homework suggestions for children/parents/carers.

In EYFS (Reception), there are no Homework Menus. Homework is in the form of reading books, which are changed regularly for parents to read with children. Additionally, extra suggestions for EYFS homework are posted on the school website’s Home-School Support page. Examples of these may be: looking for objects in the home beginning with a particular letter sound, counting toys, finding shapes around the environment.

Evidence: Handing In Homework

Homework is an extremely useful form of evidence for teachers. Children are required to hand in evidence of their homework on a day specified by their class teacher. Where there is no tangible work for children to bring in, parents may write a note in a homework book or reading record outlining briefly what the child has done as sufficient evidence.

All homework will be marked by teachers or verbal feedback given. In cases of late homework, the teacher reserves the right whether to mark it or not.

If a child repeatedly brings in homework late or not at all, teachers may call a meeting with parents/carers to discuss reasons for this. At Stretton Sugwas, we will always try and offer support.

In some cases, children may not be required to hand in homework due to the need to respect severe personal circumstances affecting their ability to concentrate.

Support: What Help Do We Give At Stretton Sugwas?

There is a Home-School Support page on the school website. On this page, teachers provide additional updates for parents/carers on a regular basis. These updates give specific information on what has been covered in class. This page, as well as individual class pages, may also include resources for parents to download. This is at the discretion of the class teacher. Parents may request a black and white copy of specific resources if they do not have the facilities at home to be able to print.

If a child cannot access the homework or has specific needs, teachers may discuss alternative homework options with parents/carers.

Parents/carers are always welcome to arrange a meeting with their child's class teacher if they require any support in the form of advice or resources.

Extra work for Term-Time Absence

Unfortunately, teachers are not responsible for giving out extra work to children who are out of school during term-time. Teachers can give guidance or suggestions but it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to help their child to catch up on the work that is missed due to a term-time absence.

Revision

For Year 6 pupils, revision for national tests counts as homework. It is important that pupils bring in such work for the class teacher to see as this will help inform where help or challenge can be given.

Complaints: What If There Is A Problem With The Homework?

At Stretton Sugwas, we value all feedback on our practices. If parents/carers have any problems or queries regarding the homework, they can arrange to meet their child's class teacher.

In some cases, problems may need to be shared with other teachers. Teaching staff regularly meet to discuss how to improve practice for the benefit of the children. The views of parents/carers will be sensitively discussed at such meetings.

Summary: Expectations

Homework is to be seen as an extension of the learning going on in class. It is an opportunity for conscientious parents/carers to see the progress of their child and how they can help.

At Stretton Sugwas, we endeavour to try and cater for all interests and social lives.

As a parent/carer, you can expect:

- Homework to be set that is within the child's ability
- Homework to be a variety of formal and creative tasks
- Homework to be accessible
- Teachers to give written/oral feedback on homework tasks
- Teachers to listen to homework concerns
- Teachers to acknowledge that the child's best is always good enough
- Teachers to try their best

As a school, we expect:

- A positive attitude towards the importance of homework (modelled by parents/carers)
- Parents/ carers to be a "shadow" or "checker"
- Homework or evidence to be submitted on-time
- Children to try their best
- Parents/carers to try their best

Appendix 1: An Example of a Homework Menu

"Homework to suit everyone's taste"
Phase 2 (Queen Bees and Worker Bees)





Homework Menu 1 Keen To Be Green





Your 5 A-Day	Weekly Treats
<p><i>"These important items are exactly what you need a little of each day in order to have a healthy education. Get stuck right in!"</i></p> <p>Check out the Website: The Home-School Support page of the school website has weekly Phase 2 updates on what is being covered in class as well as downloadable classroom resources from staff.</p>	<p><i>"Choose what you want and enjoy. It's all up to you to be as adventurous as you want! You're allowed anyone of these each week. How tempting!"</i></p>
<p>1. Suggestions for Daily Maths Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drilling the Times Tables, as well as using flashcards from website. Tackling word/real-life maths problems and how to set them out. Reinforcing the weekly Maths update on Support Page of Website. Maths games, both online and board/card. Check Abacus Activelearn. 	<p>1. Stig of the Dump: Re-create Clive King's Stig of the Dump story. Will you retell it using a comic strip, writing, making your own film? You decide.</p>
<p>2. Daily SPAG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking at Read, Write, Inc weekly rules and checking Log Book. Learning National Curriculum Word Lists. Test yourself. SATs past papers online (free downloads). Keeping a diary or journal to practise applying SPAG skills. Reinforcing the weekly English update on Support Page of Website. 	<p>2. Explanation Poster: Create a poster to explain how something works. How does lightning happen? How does a TV work? Do not copy from the internet.</p>
<p>3. Daily Reading Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Comprehension Characters to analyse texts in depth (see site). Create your own comprehension questions. Look at vocabulary. Make a note of new words and their meaning. 	<p>3. Upcycling: Like many craft programmes on TV, try to give an old item a new lease of life. Upcycle an old item into a completely new object for your home.</p>
<p>4. Suggestions for Reflecting on a Daily Basis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write heartfelt prayers to God for yourself, the world and others. Do a good deed for someone who needs it (because you want to). Think about 3 positive things you have done and/or could do better. 	<p>4. Stig Inventions: Stig used unwanted rubbish and everyday household items to create tools or useful objects. If you were Stig, what would you create? Use household rubbish and recycling to create your own handy invention.</p>
<p>5. Show What You Know: Next term, the Year 6s are doing their SATs. Using what you know, create your own question papers for English and/or Maths.</p>	<p>5. Life Cycle Models: Create a 3D model/poster out of everyday items to explain the life cycle of any living thing. What will you use? Bubblewrap for frog spawn?</p>
<p>6. Junk Models: Can you make a whole outfit out of junk and unwanted materials? Think carefully about what you can create and how it should be made. A suit out of newspaper? Shoes out of pop bottles? Be creative. You must be able to easily get your outfit on and off ready for the fashion show.</p>	<p>6. Powerpoint: Create a powerpoint to present information on any topic of your choice. Show off your English and ICT skills. Do not copy from the internet.</p>
<p>7. Bar Graph: Conduct a survey with your friends and family. Show your results as a bar graph. Remember to clearly label your axis and be neat.</p>	<p>7. Model Maths: Create a model or resource to explain a tricky maths concept. For example, something to help people understand division or multiplication?</p>
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<p><i>"If you come up with your own idea for a homework activity, let your class teacher know. We can put a price on it (up to the value of 10p) and add it to our homework "Specials Board" for other children to try. Remember, you must "spend" 20p a week on your homework. One treat and the rest from the 5 a-day. You could even get your parents to tweet the school some pictures of your fantastic efforts. Don't forget to use the school name @strettonsgwas and the hashtag #strettonhomework in your tweet."</i></p>	

Spring 2 2016

To recap, there is a very wide selection of activities on the menu for the children to do. There are two types:

- 5 a day – Important activities, which must be done regularly to have the most effect. Most of these can be done in short, sharp bursts.
- Weekly Treats – Creative ideas or projects. These can be done on a weekly basis, as appropriate. Children are only allowed to do **one** of these a week. They can choose from the list or invent their own on the same theme.

Each of the activities on the menu has a monetary value. All we ask is that the children "spend" 20p a week on their homework (referring to the value of the activities they do when added up.) For example, a child who reads a page of their reading book each school night earns 5p already. If they do all of their 5 a-day on each school night then they have already spent 25p for school nights alone. There are many combinations to suit different interests and tastes. The 20p is only a minimum. Children are always welcome to do as much homework as they want!

Children are only allowed one weekly treat in order to encourage regular work on "the 5-a-day". Our aim is that there is freedom of choice within a clear structure.

We would like to see **evidence** of the children's homework **every Thursday** in order that we can: celebrate what they have done in class and assemblies; check that they are regularly engaging in the activities properly and understand what they have to do; mark work effectively. Each child has been given a homework book. This should be used to record what they have done during the week. Even if your child has not done any work that is recorded in their homework books, please write a brief explanation of what they have done as evidence that they've done something.

Written work must be in the children's own words. Copying information from books or the internet does not show any skills. We would rather the children use the information; organise it; then put it into own words.

Should you have any further questions or any feedback that may be used to improve the homework further, please see your child's class teacher.

Kindest regards,

Mr Ford and Miss Bowen