



HOMEWORK – A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

In order that our pupils can attain the highest standards (spiritual, moral, social, cultural and academic), 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 encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents and carers to support children's learning.

Why give homework?

We believe that our children should be encouraged to undertake homework at an appropriate level. This is because:

- Learning is not something that just goes on in school.
- It can further stimulate enthusiasm for learning.
- It promotes independence.
- It encourages children and parents to understand that learning is something for which they too have a responsibility.
- It consolidates learning and aids progress.
- It encourages shared opportunities between adult and child.
- It can be a great source for gathering topic information to share with all the children.
- It is a great opportunity to rehearse key skills such as times tables, spellings, handwriting and other key facts.
- It helps to foster good habits of organisation and self-discipline in preparation for the demands of their next stage in learning.

The Pembroke School approach to homework

We understand the dilemma some families have with ensuring homework is completed whilst others have a very positive response to it – and indeed want more. Whilst we recognise homework as an integral part of learning, we believe that it should not be problematic or dominate home or school life. We appreciate that not every activity will capture children and parents' imagination and that weekends can sometimes be busy. We believe that homework should be part of learning and be enjoyable and manageable for all concerned. We do not specify amounts of time that must be spent on a task, preferring individual children and families to set their own routines. Individual teachers are happy to give advice.

We hope the children are motivated by positive incentives and by the tasks themselves; children are not penalised if they do not complete the work. However, discrete homework registers are kept and if there is a concern surrounding supporting the school's homework policy then this will be discussed with the child and their parents.

What does homework look like at Pembroke School?

We see homework as encompassing a wide range of possibilities. The following list gives just a few examples:

- reading with a parent
- a family visit to a local museum
- finishing off work from the class
- undertaking individual research for a project at the local library
- learning number facts (tables)
- literacy activities both written and verbal
- being an active member of a sports club or youth organisation

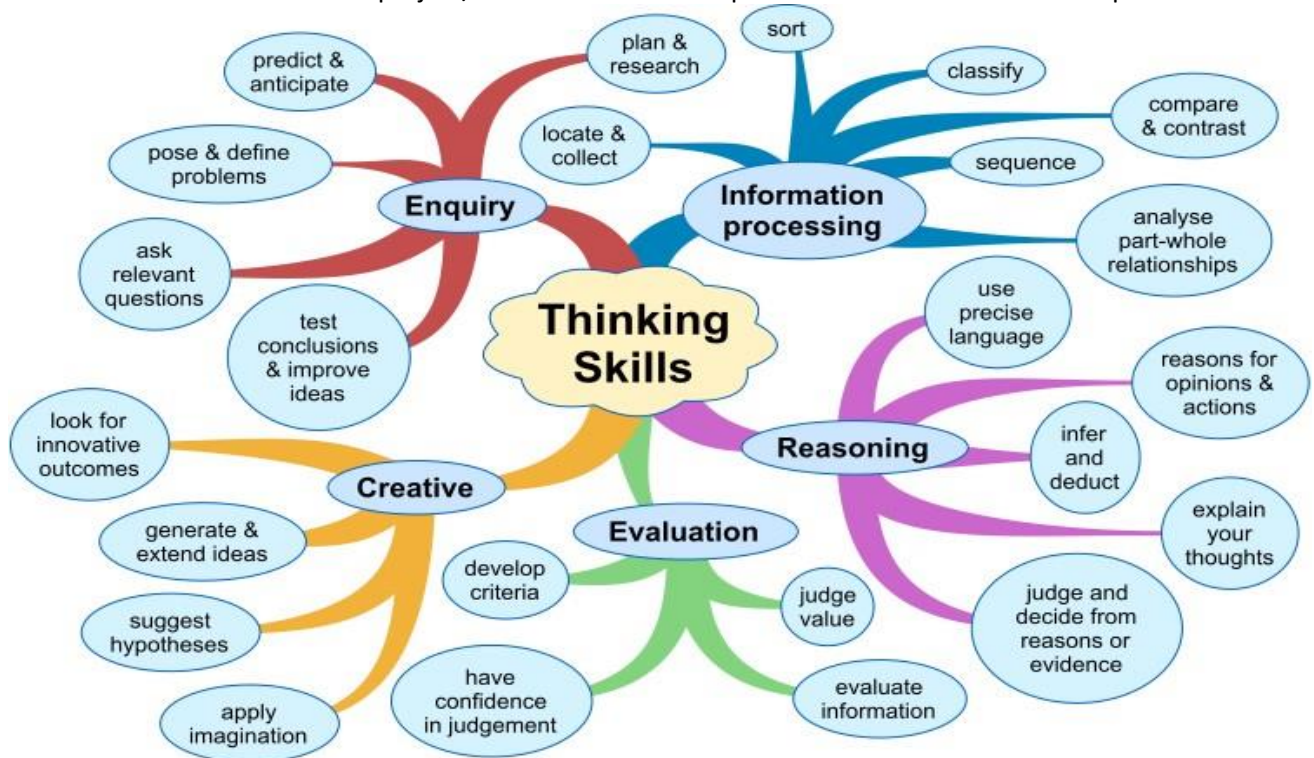
It can be seen from this list that homework can be a two-way process. Teachers may ask for tasks to be done at home, but are delighted to learn about children's success in other aspects of their lives and will seek to recognise this in school.

Our **minimum homework expectation** is that **all children are expected to read daily, complete spelling activities and practise maths facts including number bonds and times tables**. Regular handwriting and grammar tasks may be given too. The amount given is dependent on age and ability but reflects our belief that quality family time is essential too. Class teachers will be able to suggest ways in which these tasks may be completed in enjoyable and varied ways so that children are not always aware they are 'doing their homework'!

Occasionally, teachers may expect some work to be finished at home, or a method to be practised. Particularly as children move through the school, the responsibility will be for the child to want to complete the task set because they know it will make a difference.

Homework Topic Web

In addition to the regular, daily focus on the building blocks of reading, writing and maths, some parents and children will appreciate extra opportunities to develop their learning skills further. This is set in all classes in the form of a homework topic web which is linked to areas of the curriculum and each choice of homework encourages a particular skill such as “research”, “make”, “apply” or “practise”. These are linked to the school’s focus on developing **thinking skills**. An example of the sorts of thinking and language we may use (at the end of Key Stage 2) is below. Class teachers may advise the children on a certain project/task to undertake at specific times of the term to complement classwork.



A paper copy of the Homework Topic Web will be sent home but is always on the individual class pages on our school website.

Responsibilities

Class Teachers are responsible for:

- Selecting appropriate homework tasks for the children in the class, taking differentiation and children with additional needs into account.
- Helping children understand how to complete homework successfully and give helpful feedback.

Parent and carers are requested to:

- Provide a reasonably peaceful, suitable place in which children can do their homework.
- Make it clear to children that they value homework and support the school in explaining how it will help their learning.
- Give help if children request it so that it may become a collaborative effort – and enjoy the chance to join in!

Children:

- Are asked to participate in the homework that is set in order to support their learning – asking for help if needed.
- Should know about the homework that is set before taking it home and ask if they are not sure.
- Should complete it in the time scale set – if appropriate.
- Should be proud to present their work neatly and creatively.

Celebrating and supporting

We aim to celebrate homework through our team points and Gold Awards. Excellent work may be displayed and shared amongst the school community. However, we know there may be times when children struggle with homework or when circumstances arise which make homework difficult to complete. If there are **any** such problems, please let your child’s class teacher know so that support can be given.