

# Homework at Castle Academy

## **Intent**

At Castle Academy, we believe that homework is an essential part of pupils' learning. In line with National Curriculum requirements, homework is set and pupils are encouraged to, and expected to establish good homework habits from the beginning of their school life.

- Homework is set regularly as a means of reinforcing and extending learning
- Homework is differentiated to meet the needs of individual pupils
- Homework should be understood by pupils and parents, and not be seen as an onerous task.

Through the provision of a variety of activities and approaches to homework we aim to:

- raise standards in all curriculum areas but particularly basic skills in Maths and English
- create a sound partnership between parents and teachers with regard to children's learning
- consolidate/reinforce pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of work covered in class
- improve pupils' attitudes to learning and independent learning skill

## **Implementation**

Homework is defined as work set by the teacher to be done at home, either by the pupil alone or with the support of an older sibling, parent or carer. The main focus of homework will be Maths and English, with occasional tasks to extend and enhance learning across the curriculum.

Homework will involve some or all of the following activities:

- Reading: independent, shared or paired reading, with possible activities to reinforce comprehension and understanding of texts as children progress through school.
- Spellings and vocabulary extension: learning sounds and spellings; activities to apply spelling rules and patterns
- Research into an aspect of the curriculum as preparation for, extension to, consolidation of or follow up, to work carried out in class.
- Learning number facts and practice of calculation, including problem solving (multiplication tables, number bonds, etc..).
- Other tasks to extend work done in class, including topic-based work.

## **Success for All**

Appropriate homework will be set to meet the needs of individual pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs. Homework should be an opportunity to consolidate learning in class and not be something that pupils will be unfamiliar with. The nature, type and amount of homework will vary according to the age and ability of the pupil.

## **Homework Expectations:**

Homework will be set weekly on a Thursday and pupils will bring it home in a specific homework folder. Children will have a full week to complete the homework set and should return all completed homework in their folder to school by the following Thursday.

The table below outlines the expected homework across the school:

	Reading	Spellings	Grammar	Maths
FS2	Boom Reader- Log at least 4 reads per week.	Number/letter formation activity sheets.		
Key Stage 1	Boom Reader- Log at least 4 reads per week.	Weekly Spellings- paper based practice.	Grammar Activity Mat- one page.	Maths Activity Mat- one page.
Key Stage 2	Boom Reader- Log at least 4 reads per week.	Weekly Spellings- paper based practice.	Grammar Activity Mat- one page.	Maths Activity Mat- one page.

## **Reading**

### **Reading at Castle**

At Castle, we recognise the fundamental importance and positive impact of parental involvement on children's learning experiences and education.

Every teacher and parent knows that reading matters. It matters to our pupils' language development along with their academic success, whilst mattering because of its tremendous power to offer us pleasure and comfort in what are immensely challenging times

Parental engagement in reading has a positive impact on average of 4 months' additional progress for children. With this in mind we have established the Castle Academy Reading Challenge and we request the support of all of our families to engage in this challenge.

### **Reading Challenge**

Pupils are awarded one sticker on their Reading Challenge Reward Card for completing their reading homework – to read at home at least four times each week, recorded on their electronic reading log via Boom Reader.

[BoomReader Parents](#)



Pupils who exceed this expectation and read at home more than four times each week, are awarded two stickers on their Reading Challenge Reward Card. Pupils are then able to exchange their stickers for Rewards when they reach Reading Milestones at 5, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 stickers and so on, from the Reading Challenge shop which is run by our Reading Ambassadors.

Furthermore, the class or classes with the highest percentage of pupils completing the Reading Challenge each week, will receive a certificate and recognition in our Celebration Assembly with an additional reward at the end of each half term for the class with the highest engagement over the half term.

By the end of Key Stage 1, children should be able to read at a speed of at least 90 words per minute and by the end of Key Stage 2, children should be able to read at a speed of at least 120 - 130 words per minute. When children read regularly at home, they often exceed the Reading Fluency Targets and excel in all areas of the curriculum.

### **Online Homework**

All pupils have access to two learning platforms which provides pupils with additional opportunities to learn at home. Both websites offer children the opportunity to complete work and play interactive games.

Sumdog is used for Maths based learning [www.sumdog.com](http://www.sumdog.com) and for spelling practice we use EdShed <https://www.edshed.com/en-gb/login> .

### **Teachers**

In setting and marking homework, teachers will:

- give reasonable time for its completion (including time to complete tasks if homework is not returned)
- match tasks to time and as far as possible to the abilities of the children
- provide feedback to children on their progress
- provide additional guidance for parents as part of termly curriculum letters, parent workshops

### **Parents**

At Castle Academy, we recognise the importance of developing a sound partnership between parents and children with reference to children's learning.

Parents will:

- be provided with additional guidance to support learning at home and to help children with homework tasks;
- be encouraged to support the school's homework policy when signing the home school agreement;
- be given feedback on how children are doing with homework through feedback, during parents' meetings and in annual reports.

### **Monitoring**

The school's leadership team will regularly review the Policy and Guidelines on behalf of the Governing Body, alongside the whole staff team, and will monitor the quality of homework provision through planning and work scrutiny.

### **Questions:**

#### **Why do we set homework?**

Homework enables children to practise and extend skills learned in the classroom, and also gives pupils a chance to undertake research and additional learning, as required. It involves

parents (and other adults) in the children's work and we believe that homework encourages and improves independent learning.

### How can parents help?

There are many ways you can help:

- Ask the children questions about what they are learning at school (talking helps everyone understand things clearly).
- Play word and number games to consolidate early learning of letter sounds, common vocabulary and number bonds.
- Spend a little time, on a regular basis, listening to your child read and discussing the books they have brought home. Encourage your child to read words and books regularly (show them how important words are).
- Help them to form letters the way they are taught at school starting at the correct point.
- Test what has to be learned e.g. spellings, tables, number facts etc.
- Read what your child has written, and talk to them about their writing: Does it make sense? Is it correctly punctuated? Is writing neat and accurate? Have they used exciting words?
- Encourage your child to check over his/her work.
- Help your child find out additional facts, e.g. by visiting the library or researching on the Internet.

### What will happen if homework is not completed?

If homework is not completed children are often at a disadvantage in class, as many homework tasks are discussed in class and often inform future learning.

In order to establish good homework habits from the beginning of their school life, pupils will be expected to complete the homework set and we ask for your support in seeing that homework is done conscientiously and in the best possible conditions.

In cases where pupils in Key Stage 2 (Year 3 to Year 6) are not completing homework, they will be expected to complete homework in their own time in school during Friday afternoon playtime.

Where there are repeated instances of pupils not completing homework, class teachers will also contact parents to discuss further.

**All pupils who complete their weekly homework will earn additional playtime on a Friday afternoon as a reward for their hard work.**

### What is the best way to approach homework with my child?

Encourage your child to establish a homework routine which best suits them, e.g. not when they are becoming tired, etc.

For younger children little and often is best – 10-15 minutes daily is a good habit. As children become older they should be encouraged to sustain their concentration for longer periods of time, and to work with increasing independence. For example, it would be beneficial to get children into the habit of reading every evening; time spent on reading should range from approximately 10 minutes in Key Stage 1 and up to 30 minutes in Key Stage 2. We appreciate this isn't always possible every day but a minimum of 4 times a week should be encouraged.

If a child struggles with an activity, try to avoid becoming anxious about it and approach your child's teacher as soon as you can. They will spend more time explaining the task to help you and your child.

### **Can my child get help with their homework at school?**

At Castle Academy, we appreciate that pupils may have other commitments outside of school and that finding time to complete homework can be challenging. There may also be times where pupils would like additional support to complete a set task, therefore, school will provide support for pupils by holding a weekly '**Homework Club**' at **12.30pm** every **Thursday**, where a quiet space will be available for pupils to choose to complete their homework with key adult support in school should they wish to.