

East Craigs Primary School



Homework



“I hear - I forget; I see - I remember; I do - I understand”

(Chinese Proverb)

Why have homework?

It is generally accepted that homework can make an important and positive contribution to a pupil's progress at school:

- it allows further practice and consolidation of work done in class
- it provides parents with information about the work being done in class and involves them directly in the child's learning
- it trains pupils in planning and organising their work, developing self-discipline and good habits that will support them in future education and beyond
- it gives pupils opportunities to accept some responsibility for their own learning.

How much homework will be given?

When asking 'how much homework?' we tend to mean 'how much time?' should the tasks set take to complete. This is difficult in that some children work at a faster pace than others, some children are less easily distracted than others; and so our answer is based on what the teacher could reasonably expect of most children in the class. We would also expect that the amount of time spent on homework should increase as the child moves through the school and that this pattern would continue into secondary education. The figures we have settled on are based on our own experience of the great majority of East Craigs parents' expectations.

They also are consistent with those recommended for primary schools by the Scottish Executive Education Department. These time allocations will be across four evenings - Monday to Thursday each week. If completed satisfactorily this would leave the weekend free of homework.

- P1-2 15 minutes each night
- P3-4 20 - 25 minutes nightly
- P5 30 minutes each night
- P6-7 35 - 40 minutes nightly

What sort of homework will be given?

With attainment in Reading, Writing and Mathematics being given high priority in all schools, much of the homework set will relate to classwork in these areas.

At the early stages the emphasis will be on reading as skill in this is essential if progress is to be made in all curricular areas. In P1 this will start with practising the letter sounds and blending these to make words. Once reading books are introduced, the emphasis will be on working towards gaining fluency and understanding of the texts being read, in addition to recognizing key words.

The practising of reading continues to be very important in P2 and now spelling of simple words is also introduced in order that writing skills can progress. Some homework in P2 will also involve learning the stories for numbers up to 20. For example, for the number 17, children will learn that

$16+1=17$	$15+2=17$	$14+3=17$	$13+4=17$	$12+5=17$	$11+6=17$
$10+7=17$	$9+8=17$	$8+9=17$	$7+10=17$ etc		
$17-1=16$	$17-2=15$	$17-3=14$	$17-4=13$	$17-5=12$	$17-6=11$
$17-7=10$	$17-8=9$	$17-9=8$	$17-10=7$ etc		

Progress is made more quickly by those children who can recall these facts automatically.

This work is consolidated in P3 with number work now including addition and subtraction up to 100, and simple multiplication facts (2,3,4,5 and 10 times tables)being introduced. Much emphasis continues to be given to reading and spelling at this stage.

The emphasis on work in maths and English continues in P4 and P5. By the end of P5 children should have a firm grasp of addition and subtraction facts and also of the multiplication and division facts for tables 2 - 10. They should also be able to see and understand the relationships within these. For example

$$\begin{array}{l} 62+18=80 \quad \text{so} \quad 80-62=18 \quad \text{and} \quad 80-18=62 \\ 9 \times 8=72 \quad \text{so} \quad 72 \div 8=9 \quad \text{and} \quad 72 \div 9=8 \end{array}$$

Reading and spelling homework will continue on a regular basis but this will be supplemented on occasions with other work. This may involve writing a report, learning a poem, looking for information on a set topic or following certain criteria to make a model. Where an exercise will require more than one evening, parents will be informed of the suggested timescale and of the teacher's expectations. With this type of exercise we advise that homework should be spread across the time allocated.

P1 and P2 will have regular reading homework most nights. P3 - P7 classes use core reading texts in class. This will be consolidated with library books and other texts.

By P6-7 fluency in reading should have developed and so more time will be spent on reading for enjoyment at home. If children are to benefit from this it is important that the reading is encouraged and that children read a variety of genres.

More opportunities in P6-7 will be given to children to research aspects of classwork; to compose their own stories/poems; to record information in writing by diagram or pictorially; to carry out problem-solving activities such as make a working model or prepare a presentation for the class.

How can I help my child with homework?

- Please check your child's folder (P1-3) or diary (P4-7) to see what homework has been set.
- Try to ensure a quiet place (away from other distractions like TV), a suitable surface (if writing is involved) and tools (pencil, rubber, ruler etc) are available.
- Discuss your children's homework tasks with them and encourage them to do their best. Your interest tells your children that you think school is important.
- Check written work for presentation and spelling. Is the work the standard of which s/he is capable?
- In reading, discuss the storyline, help with word meanings, predict what might happen next, talk about the characters, read sections with or to your child.
- Hear spelling once it has been learned. (Some children find it difficult to spell orally but find it easier to write it down.) In class the method used to learn spelling is
 - LOOK look closely at word and sound it out
 - COVER visualise it, trace it with finger if helpful
 - WRITE reproduce from memory
 - CHECK to see whether correct
 - REPEAT process until learned
- In number work check your child's knowledge by asking number facts. 5 - 10 minutes spent regularly in this way will aid retention and speed.
- Sign the homework (not the diary!) to indicate that you are happy with it. Comment if you wish to draw the teacher's attention to anything.

Some frequent questions parents ask.

What do I do if I see some mistakes ...words spelt wrongly or sums that are incorrect?

If you think your child is capable of correcting the mistakes ask them to try again. Perhaps a dictionary could be used to check spelling or in the case of a sum you could indicate which figures are wrong. If lots of mistakes have been made and you feel you can talk your child through these then please do so but please write underneath that you have helped. This will let the teacher know that further practice may be required before moving on to the next step. If, however, you do not feel confident to do this, then please indicate underneath that your child was unsure of the process.

What do I do if I think the work is careless or untidy?

From your child's jotters you will have an idea of the standard of work of which s/he is capable. If homework is below that standard please ask your child to rewrite the work taking more care with presentation. This may seem hard but it will pay off in the longterm when your child begins to realise that only the best is acceptable. If, however, for some reason this is not possible, indicate when you sign that you are aware that the standard is not satisfactory. The teacher can then reinforce this with your child.

How much help should I give?

We welcome your support and your encouragement but it is important that your child accepts responsibility for his/her homework and we expect your child to complete it....not you!

Can my child use the computer for written work rather than write by hand?

Yes, this is acceptable if the teacher has indicated that it is appropriate. While it does give additional practice in using the computer, there will be occasions when the teacher wishes the work to be done by hand.

Can we use the internet or CD roms for research purposes?

Again, this is perfectly OK and provides your child with excellent opportunities to find his/her way around these sources of information. However, there is little value in downloading information directly from the computer. Encourage our child to read the information, note the important points and express these in his or her own words.

What if my child wants to spend more than the specified time on homework?

Credit will be given to those children who show interest and motivation in this way.

Conclusion

Homework should be a useful link between home and school. In addition it can help your child develop responsible attitudes to self study for the future. If difficulties exist please talk to your teacher or a member of the promoted staff. The East Craigs staff will work with you to ensure that your child will get the required help. Your support with this is appreciated.

