Homework and Home Learning Policy
Preparatory School

Introduction

Homework in the MHSG Preparatory School is defined as anything that children do outside the normal school day which contributes to their learning, in response to guidance from the school. Homework encompasses a variety of targeted learning activities instigated by teachers and parents in order to support an individual child's learning.

Rationale for homework

2.1 Homework is an important part of a child's education: it can add much to a child's development of mature work habits and support their consolidation of skills learnt in school. It is recognised that the time and resources available limit the educational experience that any school by itself can provide; children benefit greatly therefore from the mutual support of parents and teachers in encouraging them to learn both at home and at school. Indeed, homework is a method of establishing a successful dialogue between teachers and parents. One of the central tenets of the Preparatory School philosophy of education is for pupils to develop as independent learners; homework is one approach to supporting pupils with their development of the skill of independent learning.

2.2 Homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. However, this policy also seeks to acknowledge the important role of extra-curricular and free time in a child's growth and development.

In conclusion, whilst homework is important, it should not prevent children from making maximum use of the experiences and opportunities that are available outside of school: a balance should be struck based on individual need. Class teachers are able to support parents and pupils in making informed decisions about how to maintain that balance in particular year groups.

3 Aims and objectives

3.1 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 a partnership 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 consolidate and reinforce learning done in school and to allow pupils to practise skills taught in lessons;
- to support children with the development of good work habits for the future;
- to develop time management and organisational skills.

4 Types of homework

4.1 The Early Years Foundation Stage homework activities can be set in the Preparatory School. Girls in Reception will be asked to practise phonics sounds progressing to blending as they make progress through their formative years. As these skills develop, they are encouraged to read and books are selected for them to take home to read with their parents. Guidance information, including a focused parental reading skills workshop in the EYFS, is given to parents to help them achieve the maximum benefit from this time spent reading with their child. Activities for Pre-School pupils to complete at home will be play-based. There will be no formal homework for Pre-School

4.2 In additional to regular reading, Key Stage 1 girls are asked to learn spellings or mathematical tables as part of their homework as well as some occasional sentence or maths fluency practice. In Year 2, more formal work focused on consolidating Mathematics and English skills will be set. Pupils can be asked to explore and discuss a topic at home, prior to studying it in school. For example, pupils might be asked to bring photos and artefacts to illustrate Science, History and Geography topics; children may be asked to find and collect things that can be investigated in lessons.

4.3 At Key Stage 2, English and Mathematics homework are set predominantly and children are expected to consolidate and reinforce learning done in school through practice at home. Homework is also set as a means of helping girls to revise for assessments, as well as to ensure that prior learning has been understood. There are occasions when children will be asked to do further research on special topics, especially those in connection with History, Geography, Science and Design Technology. Girls are encouraged to use the school and local library, as well as the Internet, when doing homework involving research. Parents are expected to hear their children read from a wide variety of texts on a daily basis and to sign the reading record daily.

4.4 During the academic year, pupils may also complete their MHSG Discovery Passport, working towards an award at the end of the year. This focuses on developing their outdoor skills, problem solving, grit and resilience, inspiring a sense of wonder and curiosity for the world around us. Some activities will be completed in School, whilst others may be completed at home.

5. Amount of homework

All girls in the EYFS will be expected to spend a few minutes a day with a parent on reading tasks set by their teacher.

All girls in **Years 1 and 2 (Key Stage 1)** will receive homework totalling approximately one hour per week in Year 1, plus daily reading, rising to approximately 20 minutes per night plus daily reading in Year 2; weekend work across Key Stage 1 will total up to 30 minutes.

All girls in **Years 3 to 6 (Key Stage 2)** have a homework planner supplied by school in which they write down their daily homework. Parents may also use the planner to write a note if

their daughter has had any particular difficulty with the set tasks, or to communicate messages. In Key Stage 2, the homework allocation is as follows:-

Year 3
30 minutes handed out on Monday and returned on Wednesday, 30– 40 minutes handed out on Thursday and returned on Monday

Year 4
30-45 minutes handed out on Monday and returned on Wednesday, 40 – 50 minutes handed out on Thursday and returned on Monday

Year 5
45-60 minutes handed out on Monday and returned on Wednesday, 60 – 70 minutes handed out on Thursday and returned on Monday

Year 6
45-60 minutes handed out on Monday and returned on Wednesday, 60-70 minutes handed out on Thursday and returned on Monday

Although no marked homework will be set on Wednesdays, girls will be advised and encouraged to read, learn spellings and revise tables

Pupils in the EYFS and KS1 may have homework set out either in their books or on Seesaw. Similarly, in KS2 pupils may have work set on Teams always with paper-based options for those who require it.

5.2.1 **Pupils in Key Stage 2 who do not complete a homework assignment**, will be expected to make up the work missed during free time, either in school or at home, as advised by their class teacher. If a pupil consistently forgets or does not complete homework, then the class teacher will make a decision about whether to use the disciplinary card system, alongside supportive learning strategies communicated to the parents, in order to model to the pupil the correct learning behaviours with regard to home study. This may lead to a ~~red~~ yellow card for persistent offenders, which may involve parents being invited into school to discuss the issue and how it can be addressed in the best interests of the child moving forward. *(For further details of the disciplinary card system, please refer to the MHSG Preparatory School Behaviour, Discipline and Pastoral Care policy; available for parents on the school website).*

5.2.2 **Holiday Homework:** pupils will be encouraged to read widely in the holidays; work may also be set as part of a support or consolidation programme agreed with parents; children will be encouraged, but not tasked, to do research projects to promote independent learning. Mathematics and English revision and consolidation homework tasks may be set during longer holidays for pupils in Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6).

6 Inclusion and homework

6.1 Homework will be set for all children as a normal part of school life. All tasks set are appropriate to the ability of the child; tasks set will be adapted where appropriate so that all children can contribute in a positive way. When setting homework for pupils named on the special educational needs register, their One Page Profiles (OPP) will be utilized where appropriate. The cultural diversity of our pupils and their families is valued and celebrated, and

the enrichment that this brings is appreciated whenever tasks are set for pupils both within school and for completion in the home environment.

6.2 **Homework Club**

Homework Club is available to all pupils in Years 4–6 and provides a supportive, structured environment in which girls may complete their homework. The club runs on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:30–4:15pm in a classroom setting and is supervised by a teacher who is able to offer guidance and support where needed. Pupils have access to appropriate technology, stationery, and other learning resources to support their work. Parents may sign their child up for Homework Club on an ad hoc basis via the Prep School receptionist. Homework Club forms part of the extra-curricular programme, with full details available to parents on how to access this provision.

7 The role of parents

7.1 Parents have a vital role to play in their child's education, and homework is an important part of this process. Parents are asked to encourage their child to complete the homework tasks that are set. Parents are invited to support their children as they feel necessary and 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.

7.2 In the EYFS and Key Stage 1, children take home their 'home reading book' and parents / guardians are encouraged-to make a comment and to sign the homework planner when they have heard their child read each day.

Pupils in Key Stage 2 have a homework planner in which they write down their daily homework. This should be signed by parents each evening and by class teachers weekly. Parents may also use the homework planner to write a note if their daughter has had any particular difficulty with the set task and this can be shown to the class teacher the next day.

7.3 Girls who are absent from school due to illness are not expected to complete homework during their absence although reading will always be advised as girls begin to recover. In the case of term-time holidays, work will not be set by teachers for the period of absence. For authorised absences in exceptional circumstances, parents should liaise directly with the class teacher, who will provide an overview of the learning that will be missed and may offer advice or suggest appropriate materials to support continuity of learning during the absence.

7.4 <u>Parents receive the following information about homework in the Preparatory School Parent Handbook, updated and sent to all Preparatory School parents annually:</u>

The importance of hearing your child read and discussing the text with her on a daily basis throughout her time in the Preparatory School cannot be emphasised strongly enough; this is a lovely opportunity to talk and share something of interest with your daughter, but it also significantly develops the level of their reading skills alongside the reading skills work she will complete during the school day.

8 Use of ICT

8.1 The use of ICT and the Internet has made a significant contribution to the amount of reference material available at home, and the ease and speed with which it can be accessed. However, our teachers expect pupils to produce their own work, perhaps by editing something they

have found, or by expressing it in their own words. Children are not undertaking a worthwhile learning activity by merely downloading and printing out something that has been written by somebody else. They are also taught about the implications of plagiarism.

8.2 There are many websites containing highly educational material which can have a powerful effect on children's learning; Parents are advised always to supervise their child's access to the Internet. The school will supply interested parents with details of further sites and applications; the School also operates an annual calendar of supportive advice, information and events for parents to help them navigate their child's use of the internet at home. Whilst the School may recommend sites or apps to enhance a child's educational experiences at home, the School does not take responsibility for external links and parents should always monitor their children's internet use, to ensure their safety online at home.

8.3 Pupils and parents receive annual e-safety workshops to educate on the most current risks and ways to safeguard against these.

8.4 When appropriate, a teacher might suggest that a pupil's work is e-mailed to the school; this must always be done under adult supervision, and sent from a parent / carer's email address. If there is limited or no computer access at home, children may be given access to computers in school for homework tasks, where appropriate and / or necessary.

9 Monitoring and review

9.1.1 The Head of the Preparatory School is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of this policy, with support from the Prep Leadership Team. Samples of pupils' work and of the teachers' planning will be reviewed, in order that school development targets or more immediate actions are identified and actioned.

9.1.2 This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the School's policy review programme.

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