



Homework

Updated November 2020

At Christ Church School, we want homework to:

- be useful for children
- be useful for teachers
- be valued in school by staff and/or shared with classmates
- include tasks from across our curriculum
- help children to talk about and share their learning at home

At Christ Church School, we **don't** want homework to:

- be a source of anxiety or stress for children or families
- stop children from taking part in a range of other activities outside school or prevent children from having time to rest and play. Children work hard in school all day, already!
- add, unnecessarily, to the workload of teachers or other staff members

Why do we ask children to complete homework tasks?

- To encourage children to share and talk about some of their learning in school with families at home. This also means parents and families get a better idea of what their children have been learning in school.
- To support and consolidate learning at school, including going back over learning covered in lessons in previous weeks – this supports the transfer of learning into children's long term memory
- To prepare children for new learning that's coming up in school
- To build in all children a positive attitude towards continuing their learning at home – there will be plenty of homework at secondary schools and we want all children to have a positive attitude towards learning and working at home.

What homework tasks do we set?

We set a number of **regular weekly tasks**:

Reading	Supporting reading and writing (phonics and spellings)	Supporting maths skills
Reading every day for all classes, including use of reading diaries for children in Reception to Y2 or 3	Phonics sounds and high frequency words to learn (Rec, Y1)	Times tables to learn for a weekly test (Y2 upwards)
	Spellings to learn for a weekly test (Y1 upwards)	Arithmetic test papers sent home to review and practise skills at home (Y5, Y6)

In addition, in most weeks, teachers will set an **additional task**:

If there is no additional task set for a particular week, teachers will make this clear on the homework sheet.

a creative task

for example, a two/three week project to build a model mosque using everything children have learnt in RE about the features of the Muslim place of worship (Y3) or create the front cover for your writing competition entry (Y2)

a research task

for example, go on a 2D shape hunt around your house to see whether you can find the shapes you have learnt about in school this week (Rec), or talk with a family member about the toys they played with when they were younger (Y1) or research what historians think Anglo-Saxon houses looked like using the internet or books and be ready to share this research with a classmate (Y5)

a task to consolidate learning in school

for example, maths questions to practise column addition, a skill which was taught two weeks ago in school. (We know that practising this skill again a short time after it was taught for the first time, helps to embed this learning in the long term memory) (Y4) or revision of key grammar concepts taught in class (Y6)

an online task

for example, following up a coding lesson in school with a specific Purple Mash coding activity to consolidate these new skills (Y2)

a learning task

for example, choose a short poem that you like and learn it off by heart to repeat aloud to your class with expression (Y2) or learn your lines for the class assembly

a longer term or practical task that's better completed at home

for example, set up and monitor over the next two weeks, a simple science experiment to find out the effect of different liquids on a boiled egg (to represent your tooth enamel) (Y4) or practise the safe cutting skills you learnt in school this week by helping your adults to chop the vegetables or fruit at home safely (Y2) (*Teachers learnt a lot about which sorts of these tasks worked well from our period of home learning.*)

Practicalities of our homework:

- Homework for all classes is sent home on a Thursday and is expected to be handed in on the following Tuesday. Information about homework tasks is sent home on a weekly homework sheet.
- There may be occasions when extra tasks, in addition to the regular tasks and additional task described above, may be set; equally there may be times when the class teacher is unable to set homework. However, every effort will be made to set homework in the event of long term staff illness.
- Homework is not set over any school holidays. Holidays should be for rest and time with friends and family!
- Homework sheets should be kept in a homework folder to keep work neat on its journey to and from school.
- Homework should be named and dated, marked with H to show it is homework and completed in pencil.
- There is an expectation from the school that all children will attempt their homework each week. If children do not complete homework regularly children and their parents will be invited into school to discuss this with the class teacher or head teacher. Support from parents and carers is greatly appreciated in ensuring that homework is successfully completed and that it is a positive and rewarding experience.

Frequently-asked questions about homework

What if homework causes anxiety or stress?

Homework shouldn't be a cause of anxiety or stress. We do ask that parents encourage children to complete the homework tasks and we try very hard to make sure that children are set tasks appropriate for their abilities. If homework is causing anxiety at home or you think the homework set is too difficult for your child, please speak to your child's class teacher. If a particular task is causing difficulties, it's fine for your child to stop. If they can try again at another time please support this or, if not, let the class teacher know why the task is not completed.

How independent should homework be? How can parents support with homework?

This varies through the school. The homework we set in Reception is designed to be completed with a parent or carer but the homework set in Years 5 and 6 should mostly be able to be completed independently. Of course, even in these older year groups, we'd like to encourage parents to take an interest in the work their children are set for homework and to encourage them to complete it to the best of their ability.

The best way to support children with completing homework tasks is to give them a space and time and encouragement and interest from parents at home. If you have provided a lot of help with something, please let us know.

Why is all homework set on a Thursday and due back on a Tuesday?

We know that all children and families have very different routines at home. We want to make sure that homework is set consistently and on the same day each week so that completing homework can be fitted into families' busy schedules. This particularly helps families with several children in the school or children who live between two homes during the week. We set homework on the days that we do so that children could leave their main homework task to complete at the weekend or they could do it all on week days and leave the weekend free. We also want to make sure there are a couple of nights in the week (Tuesday and Wednesday) when there is no pressure at all to complete a homework task. We do encourage children to read every day, though.

Why do we set all sorts of different homework tasks?

Homework tasks vary from week to week and class to class. Children may be set tasks in English, Maths or any other subject. We try to set a range of different subjects over the term. Sometimes tasks are creative ones or research ones and these may take several weeks to complete. Some tasks may involve written work and others may not. Children have different skills, interests and talents and we want to give children the opportunity to consolidate and share their learning at home in all areas of the curriculum.

Homework sheets will always include:

- Information about the learning that has taken place in school that week, including the current class book(s) – we want parents to know about what their child has been learning that week so they can discuss and ask questions about it.
- Instructions for the main homework task for that week (or information that there isn't a homework task that week)
- Information about regular tasks, including the spellings/tricky words/times tables/phonics sounds to practise that week (our KS2 spelling lists are all on our website, too)
- Feedback on children's spellings, times tables and/or arithmetic tests (this may be in the form of a weekly certificate or the test sent home, rather than on the homework sheet itself). This is to help children (and their adults at home) to identify where they have made errors and to practise these particular skills/words again
- Class reminders and information about any events or trips taking place for the class in the following week
- Suggestions for places to visit outside school linked to learning in class – this might include suggestions for museums and galleries to visit or online activities to try.