

**Queen's College Preparatory School  
(including Early Years Foundation Stage)**

**Homework Policy and Guidelines**

*Policy Document*



V1: June 2017

Review: May 2018

## Introduction

The place and purpose of homework changes and develops as a pupil moves through the school. If it is correctly understood and managed by all participants - teachers, pupils and parents - homework will contribute to the learning experience and instil good work habits for the future. QCPS parents can find guidance on homework on our website updated at the beginning of each academic year.

## Purposes of Homework

- To assess the degree of understanding of class work
- To consolidate, complete and extend class work
- To build core foundation skills and knowledge
- To develop and build independent study skills
- To build constructive and positive home/school partnerships

Homework should:

- Be directly related to current or recent classwork or be revision of work or topics carried out in lessons. Research work should be clearly referenced and usually limited to one such piece of work in each term.
- Be explained clearly by the teacher setting the material. Ideally, the expectation would be that time is specifically set aside, in planning and in actuality, for such material to be presented and explained. Homework should be explained orally and, where appropriate, on hand-outs. The nature of the work should be written on the board and entered into the homework diary by the pupils. Some pupils with identified learning barriers will receive focused help with this task.
- Have clear focus and express methodology – e.g. in a piece of project work, reference sources should be explicit; in a piece of homework dealing with division, a method should be given as an example on the worksheet.
- Be judged by its quality, not its quantity.
- Reflect the highest expectations in terms of content and presentation.
- Always be approached in a flexible way by teachers – in a busy school, there will be times when a class, group or individual should be excused and all colleagues should be sympathetic to request for occasional excusal from homework due to religious holidays, sporting activities etc. In the same way, some pieces of homework may require a little more time than usually allocated – e.g. if completing a timed exercise such as a past paper and a measure of flexibility will be expected from parents and pupils as well.
- Be carried to and from school in the recommended carrier.

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- Be reviewed in class. A time should be set aside in planning and in actuality for groups and individuals to look at comments made and tasks set when books, assessments, tests or worksheets are returned to pupils. Some time should also be allowed to review each particular homework (even if this is as peremptory as “Were there any problems with the work last night?” or going through answers in class)

## **Homework in the Pre-Prep including Reception**

In the Pre-Prep and Reception, homework is viewed as a means of involving parents in their children’s learning. Homework is intended to reinforce work covered at school and should not be stressful or burdensome.

The girls are given an age appropriate homework diary at the start of the year. The diary is extremely important for teachers and parents to use as an immediate and effective way to communicate on a range of issues and comment as/if appropriate. The form teacher will check and initial the diary daily.

The From I and II Form teachers will give the girls a homework timetable at the start of the year and a letter is sent home to inform parents of this timetable. This can also be found in Parent’s Section on the QCPS website.

Homework should be given on a daily basis so the girls can establish good routines right from the outset.

## **Homework in Reception**

In Reception homework is viewed as a means to involve parents in their children’s learning. Homework is intended to reinforce work covered at school and should be fun. Set out below is the type of activity you can expect

Homework activities should take approximately 5-10 minutes per subject and the number of activities will increase during the year, starting with small amounts to nurture the girl’s homework habits. These activities will include: Phonic reading cards, Reading, Maths (and towards the end of the year Mathematics) and English (including handwriting).

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## **Reading**

Your daughter will bring home a reading book when we decide that she is at the correct stage to do so. Meanwhile, we would like her to work with you on the sounds we send home and play word games. For example: blending simple words, naming objects beginning with a given sound, drawing pictures etc. If you have favourite word games please feel free to share them with us.

The girls have a variety of reading experiences each day. Reading books will be changed when required. Please note that we do not expect the books to read in one evening. Reading is more than decoding the words – it is about comprehension, enjoying the illustrations and using their imagination to extend the story further.

**Please bring all of the above to school every day.**

It is important that the girls do complete these activities with their parents/carers and that it is seen as an enjoyable time. Therefore, it is very important for parents to let teachers know if the work set appeared to be unduly time-consuming or difficult for the child so that this can be addressed immediately.

*For a breakdown of which homework is set on which evening, please refer to the Homework Booklet specific to the Form Group located on the school website.*

## **Homework in Form I and Form II**

Homework activities in Form I should take approximately 10 minutes, whilst those in Form II should take approximately 15 minutes per subject. Children will be given homework from a range of subject including: Maths (including Arithmetic, Problem solving and Mathematics), Writing (including handwriting, grammar and punctuation) and Reading (including phonics and comprehension).

Some homework will be set as a termly skills booklet. Please do not let your daughter complete the booklet in advance but week by week as per instructions of her teacher.

*For a breakdown of which homework is set on which evening, please refer to the Homework Booklet specific to the Form Group located on the school website.*

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## Homework in the Prep

The girls are given an age appropriate homework diary at the start of the year. The diary is extremely important for teachers and parents to use as an immediate and effective way to communicate on a range of issues and comment as/if appropriate. It is used by the child to write down her homework and to note school commitments. After the homework has been completed parents are asked to sign the diary each day. The form teacher is expected to check and sign/initial the diary daily.

The form teacher will give the girls a homework timetable at the start of the year. The green skills booklets are designed to help the girls revise and consolidate any skills they might have learned in previous year groups.

The time spent on homework will vary from year group to year group, and may vary from term to term, particularly in the case of girls in Forms V and VI preparing for entrance examinations. As a general rule, the girls in Form III and IV should expect to spend approximately 25 minutes per subject on their homework and girls in Forms V and VI should expect to spend 35 – 40mins per subject on their homework.

Homework activities as a general rule may include: Maths (Skills, problem solving, Mathematics), Writing (handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar), Reading (comprehension), Science and Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning.

*For a breakdown of which homework subject is set on which evening, please refer to the Homework Booklet specific to the Form Group located on the school website.*

Some homework will consist of a termly skills booklet. Please do not let your daughter complete the booklet in advance but week by week as per instructions of her teacher.

### Form VI

The Form VI homework timetable will change after February half term when the preparation towards the entrance examinations is no longer the main focus. Various specialist teachers are keen for the girls to complete homework in a range of subjects as well as doing exciting enrichment projects. This is a great opportunity for our girls to broaden and consolidate their depth of knowledge in preparing for their transition into senior schools as well as continuing to build on the sound homework routines they have developed here at QCPS.

We will keep you informed on any changes to the Form VI homework timetable.

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Please note these are guidelines only and teachers will set work as appropriate and not for the sake of it. It is important that parents let the teacher know – usually via the homework diary or a note – if their daughter has experienced difficulties with the work. For example, girls should not be struggling with or spending hours on homework. Parents should be made aware of the need to ask them to stop if this happens and should be told to indicate this in the homework diary so that the teacher is aware of this and can work with the child. It is also important for teachers to ask parents to let them know if they need to provide substantial help.

Girls should always be encouraged to read each evening.

### **Holiday Homework**

The intention of holiday homework is to ensure that the girls keep up their skills over the holiday period as well as revising some of the work covered during this term. Girls are provided with the answers so they can mark the work themselves and are therefore receive timely feedback. This is very important in order to make each exercise meaningful. This is also a valuable means of promoting independent learning. It must also be understood by all that holidays are in the main for play and relaxation. Therefore it is very important that girls should not be spending more time than allocated for each task. Girls will return this marked work to their teacher after the holiday so they can pick up on any difficulties the girls might have encountered.

We would like to girls keep up their reading over the holiday period as much and as often as possible.

	<b>Michaelmas Half term</b>	<b>Christmas Holiday</b>	<b>Lent Half term</b>	<b>Easter Holiday</b>	<b>Summer Half term</b>	<b>Summer Holiday</b>
<b>Form II</b>		Maths		Maths		Maths
<b>Form III</b>		Maths		Maths		Maths

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<b>Form IV</b>		Maths		Maths		Maths
<b>Form V</b>	Maths English	Maths English	Maths English	Maths English	Maths English	Maths English
<b>Form VI</b>	Maths English	Maths English	Maths English	Maths English	Maths English	Maths English

### **Pupils' Responsibilities in Prep Department**

- Carry the homework diary to every lesson in which homework may be set
- Write down in the diary the necessary details about homework set (appropriate differentiated support with this task should be provided with girls for SpLD)
- Take home all books and equipment required to complete the homework
- Concentrate and persevere for the required amount of time
- Request a responsible adult to sign the diary
- Hand in the completed homework at the appropriate time
- Note and act upon feedback from the teacher, verbal or written.

### **Teachers' Responsibilities**

- Set homework tasks which are a relevant and coherent part of the work in hand
- Set homework according to the homework timetable, except in cases where no task is appropriate
- Ensure that the work set is reasonable in terms of the time allocation
- Ensure that the needs of individual pupils are taken into account, either by setting differentiated tasks or by setting tasks which allow for differentiated outcomes
- Vary the type of homework tasks set
- Allow sufficient time in class for homework to be explained and recorded in diaries
- Mark and return the work as soon as possible. Follow the school's marking policy
- Give verbal feedback as often as is feasible
- Form tutors check and sign diaries daily

## Parents' Responsibilities

These responsibilities are shared with parents in the beginning of the academic year during our Information Evening for each form:

- Provide a suitable working environment and a regular routine
- Discuss homework and assist in planning and organising time
- Provide assistance during a task, if necessary, by reading aloud and questioning, but not teaching.
- Encourage and promote independent work habits.
- Ensure that the time allocation is adhered to. If a task is not completed within the time, or if there is anything the teacher should be aware of, make a note in the diary or on the homework.
- Sign the diary daily to indicate that the child has worked satisfactorily for the required amount of time
- Communicate with the Form Tutor if problems arise
- Establish an understanding that homework is an important and serious aspect of school life and the pupil's responsibilities

## Individual/Special Needs

When planning for homework, we take in to account the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of all the children. Those who do have difficulty in making progress through the curriculum will be given extra support through differentiated work so that they can play a fuller part in their homework tasks. Their progress will be tracked and monitored carefully.

## Provision for Gifted and Talented

We provide for the more able children as a result of early identification of ability and through teacher observation and assessment. Children who appear to have a particular aptitude for a certain subject will be given extra challenges in their homework where appropriate, to extend their thinking and learning.

## Equal Opportunities

We work to ensure that all children have equal access and inclusive rights to the curriculum regardless of their gender, race, disability or ability. We plan work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals. QCPS is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential.

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## **Embedding ICT in Homework**

Girls may also be required to complete tasks using a computer. Once a week children across the school are set Mathematics and Reading Eggs as part of their weekly homework. The teacher is expected to monitor individual progress closely and to respond according to identified needs.

## **Prep Club**

From Mondays to Thursdays there is an opportunity for girls to attend an after school Prep club where they can complete their homework – receiving help and support from the adult supervising.

## **Monitoring**

- The Deputy Head will review this policy with staff annually each June
- Classroom observation by appraisers will include noting feedback to pupils, type of homework set and organisation of pupils to ensure correct use of diary