

## STATEMENT FOR THE USE OF HOMEWORK

This statement has been prepared in consultation with parents, carers and staff.

### What is Homework?

At Newfield School the term 'homework' relates to activities provided or recommended by school staff to parents and carers or activities set for pupils to complete at home. Homework activities are intended to extend and develop the learning opportunities and skill development for our pupils. It relates to any work or activities which pupils are asked to do outside the lesson time, either on their own or with parents or carers.

Each pupil at Newfield School has a unique set of skills and abilities and there is a clear acknowledgement from staff and parents that the format homework takes will differ greatly from pupil to pupil. The appropriate type and amount of homework for an individual should be negotiated with parents/ carers.

### Purpose of Homework

Newfield School has the following objectives for the use of homework:

- Develop and sustain an effective partnership between school and parents and other carers in pursuing the aims of the school.
- Consolidating and reinforcing skills and understanding developed in school.
- Exploiting resources for learning, of all kinds, at home.
- Extending the learning opportunities for pupils; and
- Encourage pupils to develop the skills, confidence and motivation that are vital for the future of life long learning and adaptability.
- Provide the opportunity for continuity of development and learning to support the 24-hour curriculum ethos.

### Partnership with Parents

Each term parents are consulted about their child's Personalised Learning Programme targets. They are given the opportunity to come into school to discuss their child's targets in detail and identify ways these targets can be continued and developed at home. In many cases these targets will form the basis of homework for pupils.

It is hoped that our parents/carers will become actively involved in their child's learning in joint activities. Activities suggested by the class teacher related to class topics can constitute

homework for some pupils and additional information may also be given in the form of a curriculum newsletter.

When pupils complete homework activities it is important that there is consistent feedback through marking, where appropriate, or through a dialogue with parents/completion of recording/comment sheets. This can be facilitated through the 'homework diary' system. The homework diaries will be monitored regularly by the Senior Leadership Team. It is also imperative that where appropriate/necessary parents and carers are given the opportunity to receive mentoring in the techniques necessary to effectively carry out the homework activities with their child e.g. use of communication strategies. This may be conducted through the training opportunities for parents.

### Planning for Homework

For many pupils the homework provided may be the extension of existing targets that have been set. For some discrete work may be planned specifically for home to extend and develop skills and knowledge. Setting the right type and amount of homework for our pupils is not always easy. It is important that we set work that is both attainable and yet sufficiently challenging. Tasks should:

- Have a very clear focus and time-guideline
- Give plenty of opportunities for pupils to succeed
- Help develop social as well as other skills where necessary
- Be varied – not purely academic
- Be manageable for both parents and teachers
- Be directly related to the essential core needs of the pupils.

The recommended guidelines for homework given in the DfEE (1998) document may not necessarily be the most appropriate guide for our pupils. Homework should not be a stressful experience and therefore should always be tailored to circumstances of the individual pupil and their family.

Some examples of homework activities may be:

- Continuation of individual targets
- Reading book (and accompanying recording)
- A homework grid related to topic activities
- Therapy work
- Self-help/ independence skill (e.g. toileting programmes)
- Communication strategies
- Curriculum related work