

Maplewell Hall School



Homework Policy

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Contents

Homework Policy **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Purpose of Homework	3
Aims	3
Homework Format	3
English	3
Maths	5
<u>Science</u>	5
Expectations	6
Support	7
Inclusion and Equal Opportunities	7

Purpose of Homework

The ultimate goal of the Maplewell curriculum is to achieve equity for our students, allowing them to compete with their peers for the very best academic and employment opportunities. Homework is an integral part of our curriculum; we believe that learning extends far beyond the parameters of the classroom, and that learning at home and in the wider community creates valuable opportunities for students to further their knowledge and skills.

We know that parents/carers play an integral role in shaping our pupils' attitudes towards learning; the Homework Policy seeks to provide opportunities to engage our parents/carers in their child's learning to further pupil progress and nurture a lifelong love of learning.

Aims

Homework set at Maplewell Hall School:

- Reinforces taught knowledge and skills to aid retention;
- Promotes independent learning, supporting preparation for college and future employment;
- Encourages pupils to share their learning with parents/carers to create strong relationships between home and school;
- Enhances the taught curriculum, providing opportunities for furthering subject knowledge

Homework Format

Homework is set regularly in core subjects in all Key Stages.

In KS3, in addition to this mandatory homework, teachers in non-core subjects set an optional 'project homework' to extend thinking, promote creativity and build cultural capital.

English

In English, homework is designed to consolidate knowledge from lessons, aid retention and practice of reading and literacy skills, or develop pupils' independence by guiding them to prepare for new content. Homework is personalised to the needs and abilities of the class by the teacher, and may take different forms for different pathways as outlined below.

Key Stage 3, 4 and 5 Homework

In Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, homework set for the Step up to Independence (B) and Learning for Life (C) pathways will focus on the development of literacy skills through personalised reading tasks, vocabulary learning and spellings.

To support with this, teachers will set homework using Sparx Reader, an online reading platform. Sparx Reader aims to build careful reading habits whilst positively encouraging reading of a range of fiction and non-fiction texts. Sparx Reader supports students to choose age and reading age appropriate books, asking frequent comprehension questions to check understanding. It starts by assessing students' reading age using an online tool and then the algorithm continually adapts reading offerings based on students' responses to what they have read. Sparx has a range of accessibility features which means it is suitable for students with visual impairments and dyslexia.

English teachers will set students weekly reading tasks using Sparx. The length of time set will depend on reading age and speed. Parents are able to track this using the weekly email from Sparx which highlights what has been set and completed. It also offers parents and carers and insight into their child's progress with reading. Students earn Sparx Reader Points for each minute of careful reading they complete, with additional points awarded for correct answers and vocabulary tasks completed.

In addition to reading homework, Sparx offers vocabulary games, and for those who have completed their homework there is a 'Gold Reader' function which encourages extended reading both through Sparx and using physical books.

In addition to this, teachers may decide to set other topic specific tasks for students. This may include (but is not limited to):

- Pre-reading of a text
- Knowledge questions and organisers
- Spellings
- Independent research

All homework will be set and monitored using Google Classroom. For Sparx, teachers will post a link, students should click 'sign in with Google' to access the work set.

Key Stage 4 and 5 Stretch and Challenge Pathway (A)

To ensure students are prepared for the demands of the GCSE Language and Literature courses, students on this pathway will receive a 60 minute challenging task. This will be set by the class teacher and will be dependent on the texts currently being studied, and may include (but not limited to):

- Pre-reading of a text
- Knowledge questions and organisers
- Exam questions and essays
- Further reading and independent research
- Sparx Reader tasks where appropriate to promote progress

All homework will be set and monitored using Google Classroom.

Maths

All students across Key Stages 3, 4 and 5, on all Pathways, will receive weekly homework on Sparx Maths, an online Maths learning platform.

What is Sparx Maths homework?

- Sparx provides personalised homework to each student, with questions that are challenging yet achievable, and tailored to their learning needs.
- The majority of each week's homework will be based on recently taught topics, but it will also include some questions from previous topics to help reinforce their learning – Sparx refers to this as “Consolidation.”
- Students access their homework on their online Sparx account, where they'll get immediate feedback for each question about whether their answer was correct or they need to have another try.
- While homework is accessed online with answers submitted on the platform, it is predominantly a written homework and students should record their work in their workbooks. Sparx has a “bookwork check” system to help students form this habit. (Students are provided with a homework workbook).
- Every question in Sparx has a support video attached so that students can get help when working independently.
- Sparx Maths automatically emails parents / carers who have registered an email with the school when homework has been set.

Teachers of Maths will set one task per week for students in their classes.

For students wishing to advance their knowledge and skills further, Sparx Maths has an independent learning section where students can access any topics they should wish to study independently.

Science

To promote retention of knowledge and practice of skills across all Pathways, SENECA Learning, an online platform, will be used for setting and monitoring homework in Science

Homework is based on the content being taught in lessons and is designed to reinforce the learning done in school. For KS3 and KS4 pupils, about 30 mins of homework is set weekly. Pupils also have access to revision guides and knowledge organisers to support their learning.

What is SENECA learning?

SENECA learning is an online interactive platform which includes quizzes and exam style questions. So far pupils have responded well to this style of homework as it also offers instant feedback thus helping pupils identify their weaknesses.

Expectations

We expect students to commit to:

- Completing homework by the due date given
- Always trying their best and challenging themselves to complete homework to the highest standards
- Taking responsibility for their homework and organisation of work outside of school.
- Talking to parents/carers and teachers if homework has not been completed for a valid reason. Ask parents to contact the teacher if necessary.
- Accepting reasonable actions issued by teachers if homework is late or incomplete.

We expect parents/carers to commit to:

- Supporting their child(ren) in developing good study habits at home
- Supporting child(ren) by checking that homework is completed on time.
- Contacting teaching staff, ideally by email, to provide feedback where necessary, particularly if there were difficulties with homework set
- Praising your child(ren)'s efforts with homework when they are working well.
- Supporting teaching staff and sanctions applied if homework is late, not completed or is not of a high enough standard for your child.

Teachers will commit to:

- Setting homework tasks which have clear learning objectives and help to consolidate work taught, introducing or directly building on and developing prior learning, leading to mastery of subject knowledge.
- Giving homework in line with the published Maplewell Hall Homework Policy and Timetable,
- Informing parents about the homework via Sparx (Maths and English), Seneca (Science) platforms, and/or Google classroom
- Ensuring students receive timely feedback.
- Setting tasks which do not need to involve parents or require specialist equipment not provided by the school.
- Taking appropriate action if homework is missed on 3 occasions in line with whole school policies.

Curriculum Leads will commit to:

- Embedding the planning of homework into the curriculum to complement and build on learning in school.
- Monitoring the impact of homework within their department

- Planning manageable and sustainable homework routines for parents, students and teacher

The Senior Leadership Team will commit to:

- Monitoring and evaluating the policy regularly via whole school self-evaluation procedures, for example, reviewing data and seeking the views of students and parents.
- Supporting Curriculum Leads in their monitoring and evaluation of homework within their departments.
- Upholding high standards in homework, and supporting with praise, recognition and sanctions.

Support

We recognise that, as part of students' additional needs and EHCP requirements, extra support and alternatives are required to ensure equal access for all.

Staff run a lunchtime Homework Club for KS3 and 4 to support with completion of homework where working outside of school proves a challenge, or where students need the support of a member of staff to complete the task set.

At KS4 and 5, students have access to Self Study lessons which can be utilised to support with completion of homework and build good study habits in preparation for exams.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

All children are provided with equal access to homework that is relevant to their current stage of learning.

Where ICT equipment or internet access is required, a paper alternative can be provided on request.