



Homework and Satchel

A guide for parents



While many students negotiate homework with ease it can be a source of stress and worry for others. This booklet is designed to outline how homework is set at the Forest School and will give you some ideas how we as teachers, and you as parents, can support your child.

SETTING HOMEWORK

Homework will be set from **Monday 20 September 2021** for most subjects - English, Maths, Science, Languages, Humanities, Technology.

The remaining subjects will set half-termly reading tasks. These consist of differentiated, subject-specific texts which will be used in class.

All homework is set on Satchel, a website where your child can log in and view the homework set.

For each piece of homework details of the task to be completed are given, any other supporting materials are attached and the date when the piece of work needs to be submitted is stated. Teachers will still discuss homework with the class and will guide and support students to help them complete it.

ACCESSING SACHEL

Your child will be given a pin code as a student and for you as a parent for Satchel by their form tutor. When accessing Satchel for the first time your child should go to teamsatchel.com/. Students then need to click on 'student' and enter **their school email** and **PIN**. If they then follow the on-screen instructions, they will be able to log in.

For help and more details on the above please go to <https://help.teamsatchel.com/en/> .

The parent login for Satchel will enable you to check on your child's homework. To access Satchel One please follow the same procedure with the parent code.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How long should my child be spending on homework?

In Year 7 your child should spend 30 minutes on a piece of homework for a particular subject. Obviously this may vary slightly as students work at different speeds. Should you find that your child spends a lot longer than 30 minutes on a piece of work, then it is fine to stop after 30 minutes. You should, however, write a note to the teacher to inform them. This will give us valuable information and will enable us to set the most appropriate work for your child.

Should I help my child if they get stuck?

You should help, but this is not to be confused with doing the work for your child. It is generally a good starting point to get your child to explain what they think they have to do. This may be enough. If not, aim for guidance rather than telling them exactly what they have to do.

At the Forest School we are trying to develop learners who can tackle work confidently and independently. This is a vital skill students will develop which will enable them to take charge of their learning and make better progress.

Dependent learners	Independent learners
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• rely heavily on the teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• are <u>self-reliant</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• cannot make decisions about their learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• can make <u>informed decisions</u> about their learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• do not know their own strengths and weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• are aware of their <u>strengths and weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• think that the teacher is wholly responsible for their learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>take responsibility</u> for their own learning and know about different strategies for learning

_____ was always my worst subject at school. Where do we turn if my child does not know what to do?

Your first port of call is the class teacher. It is a good idea to encourage your child to look at the homework when it is first set and establish whether there may be an issue. Your child can then ask the teacher for help before the homework is due.

In addition, a Homework Club is held every afternoon (Monday - Friday 3:00-4:00pm in the Library) where students can complete their homework. It is supervised, so help is available to students who struggle, and all students will have access to computers.

Students can also turn to their form tutors and their Head of House for help and support.

My child is really disorganised and struggles to keep to deadlines. What can I do to help?

Initially your child will probably need a lot of support. It is important to establish a routine for homework with a fixed time when homework is completed. As a parent you can access Satchel and will have an overview of all the work students need to do and you can plan when the work is going to be completed.

It is a good idea to buy a plastic folder so that completed pieces of work can be safely transported to school and they do not end up crumpled in the bottom of the school bag.

7 HANDY HINTS TO HELP YOUR SON SUCCEED

1. Do It as Early as Possible: Best for Everyone

Give your child a time frame — say, between 3.30pm and 5pm — to get down to complete homework. This gives students some control over their schedule (some students need a longer break after school, and others need to start right away to keep the momentum going).

2. Build Confidence: Best for the Intimidated

When students don't get something right away, they may feel stupid and start to shut down. You can short-circuit negative thinking by sitting down and figuring out the first problem together. That alone can help students remember how to do the rest. Then heap on the praise: "You did a great job on that one! Try the next one now."

Another strategy: Have your child show you similar problems students worked on in class. That may jog their memory so they can retrace the steps. Plus, it helps you see what they have already learned.

3. Cut It in Half: Best for the Overwhelmed

You can make an executive decision to lighten your child's load for a night, if:

- they don't understand the assignment.
- They are exhausted from a long day of school, football practice, and an argument with their best friend.

What you can't skip is informing the teacher. The teacher will be understanding if a student does this once in a while and if they catch up at a later date, but if your child frequently fails to finish assignments, there will be a consequence.

4. Change the Scene: Best for Daydreamers

Something as simple as a special place to work can boost a child's motivation and, in turn, their confidence.

5. Keep the Positive Feedback Coming: Best for Students Lacking Confidence

All students like instant feedback, so it is fine for parents to correct mistakes and encourage students to review and improve their work. If you praise specific improvements, your learner will become more inclined to try to do a good job the first time around.

6. Beat the Clock: Best for Procrastinators

Sometimes a young procrastinator just needs a jump-start. If that's true for yours, try "Five Minutes of Fury": set a timer for five minutes, and have your child work as fast as they can until the timer goes off. At that point, they can take a short break or keep going — and many learners continue. Racing against a timer gives students an external sense of urgency if they don't have an internal one.

7. Plan, Plan, Plan: Best for Everyone

Show your child how to "scaffold" an assignment. Divide a project into steps, then help them estimate how much time each will take. Get a weekly or monthly calendar, and then write down which steps they should tackle when — and for how long. To get the most out of your calendar, include everything so you both can plan realistically.

WHO TO CONTACT?

- The subject teacher: issues with an individual piece of homework and concerns with effort or progress
- The subject team leader: issues with the way homework is set in a subject
- Your child's Head of House: issues with accessing homework across the board
- Mrs Petra Davis (Director of Learning): issues with access to Satchel