

Homework leaflet for parents of children in primary school

Homework has a long tradition in Swiss schools. It aims to help children revise and consolidate what they have learnt in school and, by doing it, children learn to take care of certain tasks independently. At the same time you, as parents, gain an insight into what your children are doing at school.

Homework is a responsibility that children have to fulfil. Parents have to make sure that homework is done. Schools offer support for this.

How does your child work at their best?

- **Work area:** this should be quiet and tidy. Books and pens should be at hand and televisions and mobile phones should be switched off.
- **Regular homework times:** homework time must be clearly planned into the daily routine, e.g. after an afternoon snack.
- **TV, computer games, mobile phone:** These should not be used immediately before or after homework (wait 30 minutes). The brain needs time to store what has been learnt.
- Exercise, healthy food and breaks help with successful learning.

Revision is important for remembering what has been learnt. Correct revision is done:

- after 20 minutes
- on the same day
- after one day
- after three days
- after one week
- after one month

Tips for independent learning

Children learn differently depending on their personality and age. The amount of parental support they need varies. Children with learning difficulties require extra help.

How parents can help

- Take an interest in your child's homework. Let your child explain the exercises to you. Do not ask lots of questions all at once. Give your child time to respond.
- Be **there** for your child. Only help when your child asks you to.
- Do not sit right next to your child.
- Your child should do the homework by themselves.
- Only check the exercises if your child asks you to.
- Has your child correctly understood the tasks? What, exactly, is the point of them? What does your child need to be able to do?
- **Equipment:** which sheets and papers does your child need to be able to complete the exercises? What equipment and documents do you also need to get hold of?
- **Planning:** point out how your child could be **better organised** and achieve their goal more easily. Get your child to draw up a homework list. Help your child to plan in what order and when to do the homework. If necessary, assist your child in organising the homework by submission date. **Time for revision is needed when studying for tests: start early!**

If your child cannot do the homework by themselves, send it to the teacher with the questions. Inform the teacher if necessary (telephone call, school handbook, email or a short letter)

- **Who can help?** Could older siblings perhaps help with homework? Take advantage of homework help and support offered by the school. If you are not making any progress, get in touch with your child's teacher.

School is important! Let your child know this by taking an interest.

- Show an **interest** in what your child is doing at school.
- Be there for your child.
- Show that you are **pleased** when your child accomplishes something.
- **Encourage** your child to persevere and not give up if they cannot do something at first.
- **Console** your child if they fail and encourage them to try again.
- **Praise** your child more for the work they have put in than for the grades or results.

Keep in touch with your child's teacher

Make the most of contact with your child's teacher. Even brief contact creates a relationship of trust.

- **Telephone:** call the school before or after lessons.
- **School handbook, letter or note:** write to your child's teacher if you have any concerns. Ask to meet for a discussion.
- **Open days:** go into the school and take the opportunity to experience and understand your child's lessons.
- **Parents' events:** take part in parents' events and demonstrate your interest.
- **Appointments:** make an appointment with the teacher so that you have time to discuss your child's performance and your concerns in private.

Further information:

www.elternwissen.ch, www.sveo.ch, www.schule-elternhaus.ch



Film by Fabian Grolimund on the theme of learning and motivation. Homework on YouTube and www.fritzundfraenzi.ch

This leaflet has been translated into twelve languages and is available to download from www.elternwissen.ch/hausaufgaben. It was developed in cooperation with

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