



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Homework Policy

Agreed by the Governing Body on	Spring 2016
Review Date	Spring 2017
Review Schedule	Annual / Biennial / Termly
Person(s) Responsible	Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher

MISSION STATEMENT

In the St. Joseph's family, learning together through Jesus, we aim to develop to the fullest possible extent the whole person, socially, emotionally, creatively, academically, physically and spiritually.

PRINCIPLES

We recognise the importance of the role of the parent as a child's first educator. This role does not diminish once their child is in school. A working partnership between school and home enhances the educational development of the child and so helps raise attainment. We regard any help that parents feel able to offer their child(ren) at home as extremely worthwhile.

Helping a child with homework can and should be a positive experience. The individual attention a parent can give, even if only for a short time, can help to motivate a child, further build confidence and self-esteem and help progress. A parent's attention, focused on the kind of learning a child does at school also means that the child understands the value his or her parents put on education.

The key purposes of homework are

- to reinforce learning that has taken place in class
- to carry out or complete activities thus freeing up classroom time
- to provide an opportunity for pupils to revise for exams

Teachers ensure that...

- at Foundation Stage and KS1 homework set encourages parents to be involved
- at KS2 homework set can be carried out independently by pupils
- homework is checked or marked by the teacher

How does the child benefit?

Homework:

- extends the time given to learning;
- reinforces learning undertaken during the school day;
- provides an opportunity to practise certain skills;
- extends learning in a context unlike that of the classroom;
- gives the child the opportunity to work independently or with the support of an adult on a one to one level;
- gives children the opportunity to discuss and explain what they are doing, so that they develop a deeper understanding;

- can be fun;
- increases children's motivation;
- helps learning to be valued by the family as well as by the school;
- provides learning opportunities outside school, such as visits to museums, involvement in household projects e.g. cooking. This can help give learning relevance, variety and enjoyment.

How do parents benefit?

Homework:

- keeps parents abreast of what their child can and cannot do;
- provides a picture of the type of learning that is happening in school;
- enables parents to help reinforce learning for their child;
- provides a framework to clarify how parents can best help.

The school's role is to:

- provide suitable and varied homework tasks which consolidate or extend children's learning;
- clearly communicate its expectations of the work to be carried out;
- give appropriate feedback on work undertaken at home e.g. by discussing or displaying work;
- ensure that children and parents understand fully when homework is given out and when it is expected to be completed;
- provide advice to parents on how best to help.

What homework is set?

Homework is set that the teacher believes your child can achieve with increasing independence. **It is never helpful for another person to do the homework for the child** or to help them too much. Please leave the homework if you believe it to be unachievable and let the teacher know the difficulties your child had. We need to know so that we can best meet their needs and make future homework most useful.

Foundation Stage

In Nursery, children will have some home learning activities to complete during school holidays. Parents are also asked to complete a 'Parent Page' about the activities

children have engaged in during their break from school. In addition, teachers regularly share ideas for ongoing active learning at home e.g. songs, creative play etc.

In the Reception class, children have a weekly activity to carry out at home which will either have a phonics or maths theme. Parents are encouraged to help their child to learn high frequency words, to reinforce phonics and on occasions, support their child with any topic work. On a half termly basis, parents are also asked to complete a 'Parent Page' about the activities children have engaged in outside of school.

From the Autumn term, children will take home reading books and we ask that you support them with these. The school runs workshops to help you with the strategies they will need. A reading record book is also provided so that parents can add comments about their child's progress.

Key Stage 1

We recommend that children in Years 1 & 2 spend about an hour a week on homework activities. Homework for this age group at St. Joseph's will be set providing a regular weekly schedule on the following areas:

- Year 1**
- Daily reading (aim for 15 mins a day);
 - Learning key words or words that use include a sound they are learning in school.
- Year 2**
- Daily reading (15 mins a day);
 - 1 task of English and maths each week;
 - Occasional topic based work which will usually incorporate literacy or maths.

Key Stage 2

We recommend that children in Years 3 & 4 spend one and a half hours a week on homework activities. Teachers may set project work which will take the equivalent amount of time but children can complete it over a longer period. When this happens, it will also incorporate some of their literacy and maths learning.

Work will be set providing a regular weekly schedule on the following areas:

- Year 3**
- Daily reading (20 mins a day);
 - 1 task of literacy and maths.
- Year 4**
- Daily reading (20 mins a day);
 - 1 tasks of literacy and maths.

We recommend that children in Years 5 & 6 spend 2 hours a week on homework activities. Work will be set providing a regular weekly schedule on the following areas:

- Year 5**
- Daily Reading (20 mins a day);

- 1 task of literacy and maths;
- 1 longer research project.

Year 6

- Daily reading (20 mins a day);
 - 1 task of literacy and maths;
 - Revision for SATs.
- The suggested reading time is a minimum only – many children will want to read for longer periods of time.
 - Parents of children in Year 6 should be aware of the high expectations in secondary school. It is therefore important that homework is given in on time.
 - Children learning a musical instrument are expected to practise regularly.
 - All children, regardless of age, are also expected to play at home. Play is not just a relief from work, but also an essential means of learning.

When is homework handed out and expected to be completed?

Each class has its own arrangements that are set out in the curriculum letter at the start of each term.

Each class has its own system of recording what homework has been set. This could take the form of a homework book, a diary or accompanying task sheet. To help children develop greater responsibility for their own learning, there are clear expectations that homework is handed in punctually. **There is an expectation from the school that all children will complete all homework tasks and support from parents/carers is greatly appreciated in ensuring that homework is successfully completed and that it is also a positive and rewarding experience.** It is expected that parents inform teachers should homework not be completed or handed in on time.

Marking of homework

All homework that is completed in the time set should be marked or responded to in some way e.g. discussed/displayed.

Children Absent from School

There is no legal requirement that the school should provide homework for children who are absent from school through illness nor for children who are absent from school due to long term leave (holiday or otherwise). However, where a child has been temporarily excluded from school, it is the class teacher's responsibility to ensure that work is provided for the child for the duration of his/her absence.

How are individual needs met?

Most homework tasks should be appropriate for the majority of the children in a particular class. If a child has particular needs the class teacher can give parents advice

as to the type of work he or she can do at home. A child may have an Individual Education Plan (IEP), which outlines work that can be carried out at home to support their learning. This is discussed fully with the parents at their meetings with teachers throughout the year.

What environment best suits learning?

The best environment in which to learn is one that is **supportive**, and this is true of both the classroom and the home. All children respond differently to different situations. Some children prefer silence, whilst others can work in a noisier environment. Most children do not respond well if their teachers or parents show too much anxiety over their progress, or make comparisons with other children. Most children do not respond well if they are overburdening an adult by requiring help, or if they are harshly criticised for making mistakes.

Most children do respond well to **praise** and **encouragement**. Some children find it easier to work with a particular helper, which may be an older brother or sister, rather than a parent. If there are significant problems, the class teacher needs to know so that ways to alleviate them can be found.

When helping a child at home, whether with homework sent by the teacher or which parents have provided, it is most important to make this as stress free, constructive and enjoyable an experience as possible. If parents find that work sent home is causing undue distress that cannot be alleviated by their own support, then the teacher needs to know. Equally, if the teacher feels work given at home is having a negative effect, teachers will inform parents. All adults also need to remember that children will make lots of mistakes. Making mistakes is essential in order to learn. Mistakes do need to be put right, but not necessarily all at once. It is important that we give plenty of opportunities for pupils to succeed.

If a child's educational progress is a cause for concern, it is best if adults try not to pass on their own anxieties to the child, since this can serve to decrease confidence and be counterproductive. What helps them best is a reassuring adult who can acknowledge the child's own anxiety, but convince them of the importance of taking just one step at a time on the road to help them "catch up". All steps along the way to progress, even if these are slow, need to be rewarded with praise. Parents, helping their children at home, can contribute a great deal in these circumstances.

What other activities can be done at home to help children with their learning?

- Talking and listening to your child as much as possible.
- Reading ~ anything and everything! Signs, street names, newspapers, comics, books. Join the local library or a book club.
- Playing games ~ word games (e.g. Scrabble crosswords), board games, number games, jigsaws.

- Painting, drawing, making models from junk or kits, sewing, cutting and sticking.
- Educational computer games, software or visiting educational websites.
- Cooking.
- Writing stories, making up and acting out plays, writing thank you letters or invitations.
- Practising handwriting, number bonds, times tables, using dictionaries or calculators.
- Visits to the zoo, museums etc.
- Opportunities to play.

An effective partnership between home and school will support everyone involved in the education of our pupils. To make it succeed, we must have an understanding and commitment to this policy, so that all children can have a happy and successful time at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School.