

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Homework Policy

*Here at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we learn and grow through the love of Jesus.
Our community is a safe, caring and happy place where everyone is supported and valued.
We encourage and challenge everyone to achieve their full potential,
spiritually, academically, morally and socially.
We inspire others with a love of learning and aim for excellence in everything we do.
Through our own faith, we treat one another the way we would like to be treated.
We help every child to be gentle and fair: to always do their best.*

'Learning through the Love of Jesus Christ'

Introduction

Here at St Joseph's we are committed to giving all of our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations of all the children. The achievement, attitude and well-being of all our children matter. This policy helps to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all our children, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied needs.

St Joseph's is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for its pupils and staff. The governors and staff are committed to promoting British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths, cultures and lifestyles.

Homework is anything children do outside the normal school day that contributes to their learning, in response to guidance from the school. Homework encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents/carers to support the children's learning. For example, parents or carers who spend time reading stories to their children before bedtime are helping with homework.

Rationale for homework

Homework is an important part of a child's education, and can add much to a child's development. We see homework as an important example of cooperation between teachers and parents/carers. One of the aims of our teaching is for children to develop as independent learners; and we believe that doing homework is one of the main ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning.

Homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment; however, we also acknowledge the role play and free time has in a child's growth and development. Taking part in out-of-school clubs and other organisations is important however it should not be a reason for failing to complete homework. We want parents and carers to work with the school to help their children to achieve their best in all things.

Aims and objectives

Homework serves a number of purposes:

- To consolidate work done in the classroom and to allow children to practice skills taught in lessons
- To encourage independence and to explore further some areas of the curriculum
- To prepare for future learning and develop good working habits for the future
- To promote cooperation between home and school in supporting each child's learning

Date: July 2016

Date of next review: July 2018

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Type of Homework

Teachers plan homework as an integral part of the curriculum. The type and amount of homework varies as the children become more independent, homework should be the work of the child. We hope parents will work with their child by supporting, guiding and encouraging them when they are doing homework. There is guidance on the school website in how to support your child in their English and Maths.

If your child has worked diligently on an activity for the expected time and has not completed the homework set then we would expect to see a signature and perhaps a short note to explain why the work is not complete, ie *Mary found it difficult to remember how to complete these calculations and only managed to do 4 in 20 mins.* This is more helpful to the teacher than the sheet completed because a parent has told the child the answer. It demonstrates that despite being able to complete the activity in school the child was not able to remember the process a few hours later.

Much of the homework set is designed to check that children have been able to remember how to complete a task three or four hours after learning it.

Foundation Stage

For parents and carers of children in the Reception class, the most important thing you can do to support your child is to share books with them, reading to them and listening to them read. Parents and carers can do this for their child by reading to them every evening. Sharing books helps a child's progress in reading just as much as listening to your child reading. We would like parents or other adults at home to listen to your child read every day and write a short comment in the reading record.

Books are changed regularly and children are also welcome to take home other books from school. They may choose a book for you to read to them rather than for them to read themselves and that is appropriate. As the children progress through the year they will also be given high frequency words to learn to read. These are words that they need to recognise and learn to read automatically.

In addition there is weekly homework, which includes phonics and suggested maths and topic activities to do at home. Homework provides a communication link for parents and carers so that they are able to note down the learning their child does at home and so that they are informed of what the children are learning in school.

Key Stage 1

Homework can consist of reading, handwriting, spelling and maths and should take about 15 minutes a night.

Children are expected to read or be read to every evening. The children's books are changed on Friday and as in Reception Class, parents and carers should write a comment in the reading record book when they listen to their child read. The children will be given spellings to learn which are based on the phoneme (sound) they are learning and common exception words. The children should practice their spelling by writing each word out four times and this should be done regularly throughout the week and not just the night before the spelling test. Children should also be encouraged to practice their handwriting when writing out their spellings. Occasionally some teachers will send home handwriting sheets to support children. Please ensure that your child is holding the pencil or pen correctly.

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Maths sheets come home the same evening and are a repeat of the work done in class that day. The purpose of the homework is for the child to revisit the work done in class to help them to consolidate the learning. If your child is unable to do the work quickly (no more than 20 min) on their own you can help by asking your child, *what were you learning in maths today?* You may find that your child just needs help reading the words but if they are really struggling then please write a note on the sheet for the teacher to explain that your child was not able to remember how to do the task. In addition to the maths sheets, children will be expected to learn number bonds. These are numbers that add up to another number, eg $2+3=5$, $4+1=5$, $5+0=5$, for all the numbers up to 20. After that they will need to begin to learn their times tables starting with 2, 5 and 10. There are a number of different ways of learning times tables, some children find it helps to chant them while others find it easier to learn the pattern. Whichever way works for your child, it is important to know that as well as being able to say that $2 \times 3 = 6$ they also need to know that $3 \times 2 = 6$ and that there are 3 lots of 2 in 6 and 6 can be divided by 2 or 3.

Key Stage 2

Homework in Key Stage 2 is very similar to that in Key Stage 1 however the children are expected to take more responsibility for their homework. Homework can be up to 30 minutes per night. In Key Stage 2 the children have a homework diary rather than a reading record which is a place for children to record the homework, for parents to record their comments and so everyone knows what homework should be done and when it needs to be handed in. This is training the children to be organised and helping them to become independent.

Children are still expected to read every evening for 15 minutes and parents and carers should listen to their child read at least twice a week, but ideally every day, as well as continuing to make comments in their homework diary. The children will have spellings to learn which come from the word lists that are included in the National Curriculum as well as words from the spelling programme we use in school. As well as learning to read and spell the words, children should also be able to use the word in the correct context.

As in Key Stage 1, maths sheets will come home most evenings to reinforce the work done in class that day. Your child should be able to complete the sheet in a short time and if they are struggling to complete the work it is important for you to write a note to that effect on the sheet for the teacher. That way it will be picked up when the sheet is marked and additional support can be given to your child to go over the learning.

Other homework is given including reading comprehension and research tasks. This homework tends to be given out at the end of the week.

Amount of Homework

As they move through the school the amount of time expected to be spent on homework will increase and the older children will be asked to undertake research which will lead into future learning in the classroom.

We recognise that many of our parents work and getting a balance is sometimes difficult. When calculating the amount of time homework should take we do not include the time you are reading to your child or the amount of time they are reading on their own. We would expect children in Key Stage 1 to spend approximately one to one and a half hours a week on homework. This will rise to two hours in Year 3 and 4 and about half an hour per night in Year 5 and 6.

Inclusion and homework

Homework is tailored to the level the child is working at. In some cases, the children in the class will not have the same homework particularly spellings, times tables or reading books. If you feel

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the homework set for your child is too difficult then in the first instance you should arrange to meet with the class teacher to discuss your concerns. If you are still unhappy then please see Mrs Burns the SENCo to discuss your concerns.

Role of Parents and Carers

Parents and carers have a vital role to play in their child's education, and homework is an important part of this process. We ask parents and carers to encourage their child to complete the homework tasks that are set. We invite them to help their children as and when they feel it to be necessary, and to provide them with a suitable learning environment. Parents and carers can support their child by providing a good working space at home, by enabling their child to visit the library regularly, and by discussing the work that their child is doing.

If parents and carers have any questions about homework, they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher. Homework is to consolidate the learning done in school. It also helps to develop the child as a more independent learner which will help them at secondary school.

Use of ICT

A copy of the school's E-Safety policy is available from the school office and can also be found on the school website. The child's safety is paramount in all matters regarding use of the internet and we advise parents and carers to always supervise their child's access to the internet.

The use of ICT and the Internet has made a significant contribution to the amount of reference material available at home, and the ease and speed with which it can be accessed. However, our teachers expect their pupils to produce their own work, perhaps by editing something they have found, or by expressing it in their own words. The children are not achieving anything worthwhile by copying and pasting and printing out something that has been written by somebody else.

There are many websites containing highly educational material which can have a powerful effect on children's learning.

We discourage children from bringing computer disks or memory sticks into school, because of the risk of viruses. However, when appropriate, a teacher might suggest that a child's work is e-mailed to school via the office.

Monitoring and review

Teachers will review this policy at the beginning of each academic year and the members of the Senior Leadership Team will monitor the use of the policy.