

# St Mary's Homework Policy

Homework is anything children do outside of the normal school day that contributes to their learning in response to guidance from school.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Inform parents of the school's homework expectations.
- Enable the pupil, parent and school to work in partnership.
- Ensure progression towards independence and individual responsibility for learning.
- Enable parents and children to work together to enjoy learning experiences.
- Extend and support the learning experience via reinforcement and revision.

## **Introduction**

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 important role of play and free time in a child's growth and development. While homework is important, it should not prevent children from taking part in the activities of various out-of-school clubs and of other organisations that play an important part in the lives of our pupils. We are well aware that children spend more time at home than at school, and we believe that they develop the interests and skills to the full only when parents/carers encourage them to make maximum use of the opportunities available outside school.

## **Aims and objectives**

The aims and objectives of homework are:

- to enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development;
- to help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner;
- to promote cooperation between home and school in supporting each child's learning;
- to enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered in sufficient depth;
- to provide educational experiences not possible in school;
- to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school, and to allow children to practice skills taught in lessons;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future.

## **Types of homework**

Staff and pupils regard homework as an integral part of the curriculum - it is planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of learning.

In Key Stage One we ask parents to support their child through home learning. This includes reading daily for about fifteen minutes. We set a Maths, writing and topic based task each week.

In addition, practical activities such as weighing cooking ingredients, handling real money and familiarising children with measures are of great value. Sometimes, we ask children to talk about a topic at home prior to studying it in school. For example, in the history topic on toys, we ask children to find out what toys were popular when their grandparents were young, and, if possible, to bring examples into school to show the other children. When we ask children to study a topic, or to research a particular subject, we encourage them to use not only the school library but also the local library, as well as the Internet and CD-ROMs. Investigations are offered to children to further support class work.

We encourage parents to spend free time with their children on enjoyable sharing activities, for example cooking, painting and dressing up.

At Key Stage 2, we continue to give children the sort of homework activities outlined for Key Stage 1, but we expect them to do more tasks independently. Children will have one piece of Maths work and one Literacy based task every week; the latter which may be related to Topic. We also set homework as a means to ensure that prior learning has been understood.

Homework is always acknowledged and, according to the task, is either marked or used in class to support learning. For example, whereas a Maths task would be marked according to the school marking policy a topic research task may be shared in the lesson or used as part of a group activity.

Homework completed well is acknowledged and praised. There may be issues arising from the work, which the teacher will follow up in lesson time. We recognise that children have individual learning styles, which means that some tasks can be completed in a number of different ways, while others demand a particular approach.

## **Key Stage 1 Homework**

- Pupils should be able to complete their homework independently and should therefore be encouraged to read the instructions before beginning the activity.
- Presentation is very important and care should be taken with handwriting.
- Parents or guardians need to sign the completed homework activities each night.

## **Homework Nights**

Monday to Thursday

### **Every Night**

**Reading** - Parents/guardians need to listen to their child read each night and question them on what they have just read - use questions inside front cover of reading record book as a guide.

**Spellings** - Test book needs to be signed and returned each week.

### **At Regular Intervals Revise:**

- Number bonds (addition and subtraction) to 10/20
- Doubles/near doubles
- Adding/subtracting 10,20,30...
- Multiplication facts (when applicable)

### **Primary 3 and 4**

One homework activity per night- English, Maths, learning or research activity.

### **Key Stage 2 Homework**

- Pupils should be able to complete their homework independently and should therefore be encouraged to read the instructions before beginning the activity.
- Presentation is very important; homework should always be given a title and date.
- Parents or guardians need to sign the completed homework activities each night.

## **Homework Nights**

Monday to Thursday

### **Every Night**

**Reading**( parents/guardians need to listen to their child read each night and question them on what they have just read.)

**Spellings**(test book needs to be signed and returned each week.)

### **At Regular intervals**

Revise number facts, especially multiplication tables.

### **Primary 5**

One written homework each night, maths or English and occasionally, geography or science.

### **Primary 6 & 7**

Maths written homework each night and usually one other.

**Amount of homework**

As they move through the school, we increase the amount of homework that we give the children. We expect children in Key Stage 1 to spend approximately one hour a week doing homework, although this may well include reading with a parent. We encourage children in Primary 3 and 4 to spend approximately one hour on homework per week, and children in Primary 5, 6 and 7 to spend approximately one and a half to two hours a week.

**Inclusion and homework**

We set homework for all children as a normal part of school life. We ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to the ability of the child, and we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way. When setting homework to pupils who are named on the register of special needs, we refer to those pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEPs). We value and celebrate the cultural diversity of our pupils and their families, and we appreciate the enrichment that this brings.

**The 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 the sort of environment that allows children to do their best. 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. Ideally parents should read with their children every day to help them develop a love of books and stories and help them to grow in confidence. We ask parents and carers to sign their child's Reading Record to show that they have heard their children read.