

St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Homework Policy

MISSION STATEMENT

By working together at St Mary's CVA we aim through Jesus Christ to share God's love, helping our community to learn, grow and make a difference.

Introduction

At St. Mary's we believe that homework is a very important part of education, and can add much to a child's development. It is an opportunity for parents, children and the school to work together in partnership in relation to children's learning. The government made clear its commitment to homework in the White Paper *Excellence in Schools*, where homework was described as 'an essential part of good education'. One of the aims of our teaching is for children to develop as independent learners, and we believe that homework is one of the main ways to develop the responsibility, confidence and self-discipline needed to study independently. While homework is important, it should not be an onerous task, nor should it create stress within the family. We believe that the various out-of-school clubs and other organisations, alongside homework, play an important part in the lives of our pupils.

Aims

The aims of homework are:

- Improve the quality of the learning experience offered to pupils and to extend it beyond the classroom environment.
- Encourage pupils and their parents to share and enjoy learning experiences.
- Reinforce work covered in class by providing further opportunities for individual learning.
- To practise or consolidate basic skills and knowledge
- To help children develop good work habits for the future.
- To use homework as a tool to help continue to raise standards of attainment, especially in Mathematics and English.
- Ensure consistency of approach throughout the school.

Our Approach

It should be noted that homework can be set in many different forms with many different expectations and outcomes. Homework is marked according to the school marking policy. There may be issues arising from the work and we ask parents/ carers to inform us if there were any particular difficulties. This can be done through the homework log. Staff and pupils regard homework as an integral part of the curriculum - it is planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of learning. Therefore, we feel that homework is not an option. It must be completed by the specified date and pupils will be acknowledged and praised for this. We appreciate that sometimes there may be a good reason for work not being completed, therefore we ask parents to inform the class teacher through their child's homework log. When children do not complete their homework on more than one occasion over a half term,

they may miss playtime/lunchtime to complete tasks and parents will be contacted if this continues.

Role of the Class Teacher

To set regular weekly homework in an easily followed routine.

- To provide an explanation of homework tasks
- To ensure any homework is purposeful and links directly to the curriculum being taught.
- To reward and praise children who regularly complete homework tasks.
- To mark homework and give feedback to pupils and parents on a weekly basis.

Unfortunately, if homework is handed in late, next step marking can not be guaranteed.

Role of Parents/Carers

- To become actively involved and support their child with homework activities.
- To support the school by encouraging their child to complete homework tasks set, starting with responding to the previous week's wish.
- To inform their child's class teacher if they are unable to complete their homework that week and alternative arrangements agreed.
- To encourage their child to take responsibility for their homework by ensuring they take it home on a Friday and hand it in on a Tuesday.
- To make it clear that they value homework and they support the school by explaining how it can help learning.
- To supervise their child's access to the internet when researching a topic and encourage children to use the information wisely to produce their own work.

At St. Mary's, we are very keen for parents to support and help their children with homework. We take the view that children are likely to get more out of an activity if parents get involved. However, there are times when we will want to see what pupils can do on their own. It is particularly important, as they get older, for children to become increasingly independent in their learning. If a parent is unsure about how to support their child with their homework, they should discuss it with their child's teacher.

Inclusion

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. We plan work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals. When setting homework for pupils who are named on the special educational needs list, we refer to those pupils' Multi-Element Plans (MEPs). We value and celebrate the cultural diversity of our pupils and their families, and we appreciate the enrichment that this brings.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to agree and then monitor the school homework policy. This will be completed by the curriculum committee.

Approved: January 2017

Reviewed: December 2021

Homework Activities

Recommended Time Allocation

All children will be provided with a homework log in which to keep their homework. This will act as a means of communication between home and school and parents are encouraged to sign the work off each week. Homework will be allocated by the class teacher every Friday across the whole school. Pupils will be expected to hand in their log with the completed work by the following Tuesday. This will then be marked and handed back to children with their next steps for learning, along with their next piece of homework on the Friday. We encourage all children to revisit the next steps from the previous week, this will be rewarded with an extra merit/stickers.

Pupils who return their homework on time, showing a clear effort to complete, will be rewarded with a merit. If you can foresee any difficulties with homework, please let your child's class teacher know as soon as possible and they will be more than willing to make alternative arrangements. If your child is having any particular difficulties with homework, the child and parent can access the after school homework club. Days and times will be advertised at the beginning of each academic year. When children do not complete their homework on more than one occasion over a half term, they may miss playtime/lunchtime to complete tasks and parents will be contacted if this continues.

Homework tasks will be varied in order to meet the needs of all pupils, with a particular focus on basic skills. All homework tasks will have a recommended amount of time indicated next to that task. The time allocations for homework activities are as follows;

Foundation Stage 10 mins per day

- Daily reading with children - this could be reading signs, labels and recipes to your child
- Visiting a local library
- Practice phonic skills using the flashcards as part of the reading scheme
- Counting activities around the home environment - counting stairs, reading number plates, play dice/card games, singing counting songs on the way to school.

Years 1 and 2 1 hour per week

- Daily reading with children - this could be reading books, comics, and recipes with your child
- Visiting a local library, help your child search for a book
- Practice phonic skills using the flashcards as part of the reading scheme
- Practice spelling common words as part of phonic skills
- Counting in steps of 1's, 2's, 5's and 10's forwards and backwards.
- Learning number bonds to 20.
- Helping your child to find out about a particular topic

Years 3 and 4**1.5 hours per week**

- Daily reading with children - this could be reading books, comics, and recipes with your child
- Visiting a local library, help your child search for a book
- Writing a book review
- Practice phonic skills by helping them to spell common words correctly
- Practice mental maths strategies - adding items whilst shopping, working out the correct change
- Learning times tables up to x10 - singing songs, doubling and halving whilst cooking, playing games
- Helping your child to find out about a particular topic

Years 5 and 6**2 hours per week**

- Daily reading with children/independent reading - discuss the book with your child
- Use a local library
- Writing a book review or an alternative ending to a story
- Practice phonic skills by helping them to spell challenging words correctly
- Practice mental maths strategies - adding several items whilst shopping, working out the correct change, working out the cost of discounted items.
- Practice times tables up to x12
- Helping your child to research a particular topic using books, the internet and visiting local museums.