

St John Vianney Catholic Primary School

HOMEWORK POLICY



Seeking Growth Together

Purpose and Aims of Homework

At St John Vianney's Catholic Primary School we are:

"Seeking growth together."

With this in mind, we strive to enable children to become independent learners and to fulfil their potential. So much of what children do outside school is 'educational', so when children are pursuing their own interests, reading for pleasure, making, doing and helping, we could say that 'homework' is being done. Parents' involvement in this informal homework is a key part of the teacher-parent-child partnership and is very much valued. When children sense that their parents and their school are in broad agreements about their education, the results can only be positive and productive. This is also the case with formally set homework and this policy will be helpful for children, staff and parents in clarifying matters which can arise in relation to homework.

Purpose and Aims

For this policy 'homework' refers to any work which pupils are asked to do outside lesson time, either on their own or with parents and carers. The purpose and aims include:

- Developing an effective partnership between the school and parents and other carers in pursuing the aims of the school;
- Consolidating and reinforcing skills and understanding, particularly in literacy and maths;
- Exploring resources, for learning, of all kinds, at home;
- Extending and enriching school learning, for example through additional reading;

- Encouraging pupils as they get older to develop the confidence and self-discipline needed to study on their own and preparing them for the requirements of secondary education and to help them to develop good work habits for the future;
- Ensuring the needs of the individual pupil are taken into account;
- Ensuring consistency of approach throughout the school;
- Ensuring parents have a clear understanding about expectations.

Homework has, of course, similar aims to other school work, but in particular, it can be useful for:

- Reinforcing work done in class;
- Completing a piece of work begun in school, so encouraging self-direction;
- Making it easier for parents to see what children are learning;
- Helping children to understand that learning is not confined to school hours.

The purposes of homework change as children get older and progressively provide an opportunity for them to develop the skills of independent learning. This should increasingly become its main purpose.

Expectations for Homework at St John Vianney's Catholic Primary School

Children can expect:

- To be set achievable tasks at an appropriate level for their ability;
- To have all homework tasks clearly explained to them on the day they are set;
- Key Stage 1 children will have clearly written instructions so that parents are able to support the activity;
- Verbal or written feedback from their class teacher about the homework they have completed.

Parents can expect:

- Regular homework to be set with clear written instructions;
- Homework that their child is able to complete and understand;

- A response from the class teacher to any questions the parent may have about the homework set;
- To be informed if homework is not set for any reason.

Children can expect:

- Children to complete the homework by the date set;
- An explanation from parents if homework is not completed for any reason'
- Parents to support their child in completing the task and to inform teachers of any difficulties with homework.

Appropriate Homework Activities for Pupils in EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

The main focus of homework and home activities for pupils at St John Vianney Catholic Primary School will be on Literacy and Maths. Science and research-type work for topics related to foundation subjects such as History and Geography may be added as the children move up the school, without losing this focus on Literacy and Numeracy. Homework given to older children will gradually be more demanding, differentiated to take account of individual needs and might include:

- Finding out information;
- Reading in preparation for lessons;
- Preparing oral presentations;
- More traditional written assignments.

The precise amount of time spent on homework is much less important than the quality of tasks set and the way they are planned to support learning. However, broad expectations about the amount of time pupils might reasonably be expected to spend on homework, provides a useful framework and discipline for schools and are helpful for parents. Our policy therefore sets out in broad terms both the kind of tasks pupils will be expected to do and the school's expectations about the amount of time children in different year groups can expect to spend on them:

- **Reading should be a daily activity**, whilst the time spent on other activities may be averaged out over the week.
- Other tasks such as practising for assemblies and researching may be set during a term.

At Key Stage One, activities could include:

- Maths games/activities;
- Literacy tasks;
- Finding out information for a topic.

At Key Stage Two, activities could include:

- Project work;
- Research;
- Maths activities;
- Literacy activities - oral and written;
- Book reviews;
- Science activities.

The following differences in homework activities may be evident across year groups:

Reception

- Reading books taken home weekly and to be read daily (minimum of 10 minutes reading daily).
- High frequency words and red tricky words.
- RWI: New words and activities where appropriate.
- Maths challenges: parents select a card to take home.
- Topic activities where appropriate.
- Lexia.

Year 1

Homework will be issued each Friday and children are expected to have completed it by the following Wednesday.

- Reading books taken home weekly and to be read daily (minimum of 10 minutes reading daily).
- Phonics/spelling/High Frequency Words activity (weekly).
- Literacy activity (weekly).
- Maths activity (weekly).
- Lexia.
- RM Easimaths.

Year 2

Homework will be issued each Friday and children are expected to have completed it by the following Wednesday.

- Reading books taken home weekly and to be read daily (minimum of 10 minutes reading daily).
- Phonics/spelling/High Frequency Words activity (weekly).
- Literacy activity (weekly).
- Maths activity (weekly).
- Lexia.
- RM Easimaths.

Year 3

Homework will be issued each Friday and children are expected to have completed it by the following Thursday.

- Reading books taken home weekly and to be read daily (minimum of 10 minutes reading daily).
- Spelling/High Frequency Words activity (weekly).
- Literacy activity (weekly).
- Maths activity (weekly).
- Times tables practice.
- Lexia.
- RM Easimaths.

Year 4

Homework will be issued each Friday and children are expected to have completed it by the following Thursday.

- Reading books taken home weekly and to be read daily (minimum of 10 minutes reading daily).
- Spelling/High Frequency Words activity (weekly).
- Literacy activity (weekly).
- Maths activity (weekly).
- Times tables practice.
- Lexia.
- RM Easimaths.

Year 5

Homework will be issued each Thursday and children are expected to have completed it by the following Monday.

- Reading books taken home daily and to be read for a minimum of 10 minutes per night. Children are asked to return books and reading records each day.
- Literacy activity (weekly).
- Maths activity (weekly).
- Times tables practice.

- Lexia.
- RM Easimaths.
- Class project (where appropriate).

Year 6

Homework will be issued each Thursday and children are expected to have completed it by the following Monday.

- Reading books taken home weekly and to be read daily (minimum of 20 minutes reading daily).
- Spelling/High Frequency Words activity (weekly).
- Literacy activity (weekly).
- Maths activity (weekly).
- Times tables practice.
- Lexia.
- RM Easimaths.
- Class project (where appropriate).
- SAT revision-style activities when appropriate.

The teachers in all classes may change the nature of homework on occasion.

The Use of ICT

Children across all key stages may use a computer or the internet to complete their homework, if this is relevant to the task.

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, at St John Vianney Catholic Primary School, teachers expect pupils to produce their own work, perhaps by editing something they have found, or by expressing it in their own words. Simply copying another person's writing, does not demonstrate that learning has taken place.

Internet safety is an important factor in children accessing age-appropriate material/information on their computer at home. Parents are encouraged to ensure that whenever their child is accessing the internet, they are doing so appropriately, with adult supervision.

Parents are advised to consider using appropriate software to ensure that their children are safe on the internet.

Inclusion

In order to personalise learning for all pupils, class teachers may set differentiated homework, in order to direct learning at the appropriate level for individual pupils in their class. This may result in additional support being offered in the form of e.g. a scaffolded activity, for those children with Special Educational Needs or it may take the shape of additional challenge, for those pupils who are Able, Gifted and Talented. It may simply be that the skill level for the activity is differentiated to ensure that all children have the opportunity to make appropriate progress.

Setting appropriate homework, which does not demand too much or too little of the children and their parents, needs close co-ordination between class teachers, special needs co-ordinators and parents. Tasks should:

- Have a clear focus;
- Give opportunities for children to succeed;
- Help develop social, as well as other skills where necessary;
- Be varied and not be purely written assignments;
- Be manageable for teachers.

There are homework clubs that are run on a Monday for both Key Stage 1 and 2. For Key Stage 1, children may select this club as a chance to do homework (ICT based) activities with teachers.

For Key Stage 2, children are asked to attend if homework has not been completed or if low scores have been attained in spellings or times table tests. This enables them to receive teacher support in any areas necessary.

The Role of Parents and Carers in Supporting Pupils

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- Take an interest in their child's schoolwork and give them plenty of encouragement and praise.
- Support their child in taking responsibility for organising and doing their homework.

- Create a quiet space at home where their child can work without being disturbed.
- Help their child get as much access as possible to information through their local library and, if they have a computer at home, the internet.
- Help their child create a routine that works for them.
- Make television/computer games a prompt for discussion and learning, but don't let them get in the way of study time. Make TV/computer games a treat for progress, rather than a background feature.
- If their child is taking important exams, i.e. SATs, encourage them to do their best, reward any progress they make and let them know they are really pleased with their efforts.
- Make sure their child has fun, relaxes and gets plenty of sleep!

Sometimes difficulties may arise if a parent/carer is not clear about the nature of the homework task, or feels that too much or too little homework is being set. Very occasionally, parents may wish their children to have no homework at all. Under these circumstances, parents are invited to discuss the matter with their child's teacher. It is not the teacher's responsibility to ensure children complete homework tasks - this responsibility rests with the child and their parents. Teachers will remind children of the tasks set and homework will be given out within a regular pattern. Should children need homework explained to them, teachers will support them so that they understand the task.

Feedback for Pupils, Parents or Carers and Teachers

When homework is done together with adults, children will often receive immediate feedback on what they have done. In the case of work they have completed on their own, they will receive feedback from their teachers as quickly as is possible. This feedback may be through marks or comments from the class teacher. On a general level, class teachers may recognise children's efforts through a reward system, in order to maintain pupils' motivation.

When parents and carers have carried out activities with the children, teachers will be interested in feedback from them, on how the children did the activity and on whether activities were interesting/too easy/too difficult etc.