

St Gregory's
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Pursuing Excellence:
Welcoming All

St Gregory's Catholic Primary School

Homework Policy

Members of staff responsible:

Mr. John Daley

Date policy approved by the Governors:

January 2019

Date to be reviewed:

Autumn term 2021

This policy is intended as a framework for staff, parents and governors of the school. In outlining a policy for the setting of homework, the aim is to work towards uniformity and progression from Reception to Year 6.

OFSTED State that teachers set ‘...appropriate homework that...match individual needs accurately.’

We believe that there is enormous advantage in children spending regular periods of time, initially quite short, on different learning activities devised by the school as part of a homework programme which supports the work done in class. These do not need to be very formal or done without help; for Key Stage 1 homework should consist largely of phonics and sharing books with parents with other short tasks as required. Homework need not and should not get in the way of other activities which they may do after school – such as sport, music and clubs of all kinds.

We therefore define homework as any work or activities which pupils are asked to do outside lesson time, either on their own or with parents or carers.

THE PURPOSE OF HOMEWORK

Through this policy we aim to:

- Ensure consistency of approach throughout the school
- Ensure progression towards independence and individual responsibility
- Ensure the needs of the individual pupil are taken into account
- Ensure parents/guardians have a clear understanding about expectations from themselves and the pupil

- Continue the quality of learning experience offered to pupils
- Extend and support the learning experience via reinforcement and revision
- Provide opportunities for parents, pupils and school to work in partnership
- Provide opportunities for parents and pupils to work together to enjoy learning experiences
- Consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding particularly in Literacy and Numeracy
- Encourage pupils as they get older to develop the confidence and self discipline needed to study on their own and prepare them for the requirements of secondary transfer

The purposes of homework change as children get older. In the Reception class and Key Stage 1 short activities of different kinds – simple games, phonics and number facts, and, of course, reading together – provide a very important opportunity for young children to talk about what they are learning to an interested adult and to practise key skills in a supportive environment.

As children get older, homework provides an opportunity for children to develop the skills of independent learning, and this should increasingly become its main purpose. It is important that children should gradually get into the habit of regularly devoting periods of time, which may not be long, to study on their own. Homework does not just mean formal exercises carried out by children without help from adults. Particularly in the case of younger children, it is the involvement of parents and carers in joint activities, which can be very brief, which is most valuable in promoting children's learning.

The type and amount of homework which is appropriate for pupils of different ages

Recommended time allocation for homework:

At St Gregory's School Foundation Stage pupils in the Reception Class begin a homework programme which involves phonics and early maths. This should take up to an hour every week.

Yrs 1 & 2	1 hr week	(reading, spelling, other literacy and numeracy work)
Yrs 3 & 4	1 ½ hrs week	(literacy & numeracy as Yrs 1 & 2 with some assignments in other subjects)
Yrs 5 & 6	30 mins a day	(regular weekly schedule with continued emphasis on literacy & numeracy but also ranging widely over the curriculum).

We do not expect the children to work longer than the approved time limit providing they have worked hard on their set tasks. If your child is taking longer than the recommended time, please stop and make a note in the homework book to that effect. Where your child is regularly exceeding these time guidelines please contact the school to discuss this. We want the children to enjoy their homework (if at all possible!)

Reading

On days when the homework activity is something other than reading, children should be encouraged, in addition, to read – on their own or with others – for at least 20 minutes (less for infants).

Numeracy

A variety of maths activities for all age groups are periodically sent home from school. The activities set are tried and tested and can be used at home to extend your child's understanding of number.

More details for each year group can be found later in the policy.

The role of parents and carers in supporting pupils

Parents/carers play a vital part in supporting pupils working at home. It is important that they:

- Provide a reasonable, peaceful suitable place in which pupils can do their homework – alone or, more often for younger children, together with an adult
- Make it clear to pupils that they value homework, and support the school in explaining how it can help their learning
- Encourage pupils and praise them when they have completed homework.
- Sign their child's homework book to ensure that they are satisfied with their child's efforts.

A regular dialogue between home and school can be carried out through the use of the children's reading record books, in which both teachers and parents can record comments. At the start of each academic year the teacher will send the expectations and guidelines for homework for that year group.

Reception

In the Reception year homework consists mainly of reading and phonic development. Shared reading plays a very important part during the child's first weeks in school. A meeting is organised early in the academic year to explain the reading process. The children bring home a variety of story books and picture books to be read with or by parents. Gradually, as the child begins the school scheme, reading books are brought home twice each week. At this stage in a child's career it is important that parents spend at least 10 minutes each evening sharing reading and encouraging their child to enjoy their early experience of books. Over the year parents will be expected to help their child with the early stages of phonics.

Year 1

In Year 1 reading books are brought home three times per week together with a library book of their choice. It is ideal if parent and child can find a suitable time when both gain enjoyment from reading together. Phonics homework is sent home to be practiced every week. These spellings will include words based on a phonic pattern as well as words highlighted in the high frequency word list. Occasionally a child may be given maths games or simple research to carry out at home.

Year 2

Reading still plays a very important part in the homework programme, generally books being brought home regularly. Parents still play a vitally important part, encouraging children in their efforts and promoting and sharing a love of books. As in Year 1, the children will be expected to complete phonics tasks every week. Every week children will

be given a maths homework task. This may be linked to work being carried out in the classroom or reinforcing number facts or tables.

Year 3 and 4

Children are still encouraged to bring home their reading books nightly even when they become 'free readers'. It is not necessary for parents to hear every page of a book. An interest in the child's reading is still very necessary and an adult should listen to occasional pages being read and question the child on others, in order to assess understanding of the text.

Spelling linked to phonics and topic work are given each week. The children are expected to learn these words over several days. Maths activities will be sent home as part of a weekly homework programme in Year 3 and 4.

The children will also be expected to carry out research or other work which is topic related.

Year 5 and 6

Reading: At this stage most children will not need to be heard read as regularly as before but we still expect your child to spend at least 20 minutes each evening reading a wide variety of material from which they can gain enjoyment. It is imperative that school and home continue to monitor progress so that children experience a full range of written material.

The children will be given spellings to learn most weeks. In addition to these spellings they will be expected to spend at least one hour each week on a maths and/or an English activity.

Pupils in Year 6 will also be given additional homework tasks in the Spring and early Summer term to help prepare them for their SATs.

Unfinished work

In addition to the above, certain children may be expected, within reason, to complete particular pieces of work begun in class. There may be several reasons for the child having to bring work home.

Respecting homework

All homework should be carefully respected and returned to school in good condition. Children should take responsibility for the care of their books.

Homework Books

The provision, style and use of homework books will be at the discretion of each individual teacher and will vary throughout the school. Your child will be informed at the beginning of each year of the system to be implemented.

Expectations of Parents

The school views the pupils' learning as a partnership – the child, the parent and the school. It is important that children are offered guidance and support when completing homework and have a good working environment. Homework is a child's learning carried out at home.

Footnote

We fully appreciate that many children and their families occasionally have some very busy evenings and it may be impossible to complete the homework set. We expect a note to be sent to school indicating the reason for failure to complete the homework. The homework must then be completed at a later date. However, pupils are usually given ample time to complete homework. Parents are asked to encourage their children to manage the balance between homework and other activities.

Here is an outline of expectations for each of our classes in school in relation to the above.

Class	Homework
1	Homework for children in their Reception year consists of ongoing activities surrounding reading, writing and phonics skills i.e. initial colouring sheets to get to know the Biff and Chip characters, word game wheels to learn some high frequency words, reading books and phonics slips. There is no set 'due date'. The expectation is that you do a little work with your child <u>every day</u> . You can use your child's reading record to let me know how they have got on with their activities.
2	Homework will be given out on Fridays and is due back in the following Wednesday. This usually takes the form of 2 pieces, either topic/RE/literacy and a piece of numeracy. Each piece of homework is related to the learning that has taken place that week, or is in preparation for the learning that is to come. Children are also asked to read every day at home for approx. 5 -10 minutes.
3	Homework in class 3 is either project based, where tasks are set over 1 to 2 weeks. If not project based then it will be a piece of numeracy and literacy. This is set on Fridays and expected to return on a Wednesday. With effect from January 2012 going to be "Big Spelling" work, where children will learn words each week for in-class sentence work.
4	Children will be set approximately two pieces of homework each week. This will be linked to work that we have completed in class during the week and will be used to consolidate and/or extend learning. There will be no set day for homework, as it is essential that children get used to organising their own time; this is important for their transition to High School. Each piece of homework will be recorded in the home/school diary, by your child. Additionally, children will be expected to read at least three times a week. This must be recorded in their home school diary, which is monitored each week. Please support your child by signing their homework diary each Thursday before he/she hands it in to the class teacher on a Friday