

# **St James the Less RC Primary School**

## **HOMEWORK POLICY**

**Reviewed Autumn 2019**

### **Our Mission Statement**

**S**afe and secure in our friendly catholic school

**J**oyful and happy with Jesus in our hearts

**T**o be the best that we can be

**L**ove and respect for the uniqueness of everyone

## **Rationale**

Research has shown that homework or home activities can make an important contribution to children's progress at school. At St James the Less we value parents and carers as partners in their children's learning. Through a structured approach to homework we seek to develop a (continuous) structured programme that gives clear expectations each week.

## **Purposes – To produce a consistent approach through the school**

- To help children progress towards independence and individual responsibility and develop long term strategies for independent learning.
- To ensure that parents/guardians have a clear understanding about expectations from themselves and their child.
- To extend learning experience via reinforcement and revision.
- To consolidate and reinforce children's skills, knowledge and understanding, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy.
- To provide opportunities for partnership between parents, pupils and school
- To provide opportunities for parents and pupils to work together and enjoy learning experiences.
- At Year 6 to prepare pupils for Secondary Transfer where they will be expected to complete two homework activities per night, approximately 30-40 minutes each

## **The Types of Homework**

Learning at home does not just mean completing worksheets and formal written exercises carried out without help from an adult. All children need to participate in purposeful, joint activities and tasks with an interested parent/carer. Talking together, playing games, reading together, learning facts, browsing the internet or visiting the library to find out about current topics are important.

Everyday activities in the home can also support learning e.g. weighing food for dinner, carrying out money transactions when shopping etc can reinforce mathematical skills. It is particularly important that parents spend time speaking and listening to their children and provide a good role model. This promotes effective communication so that children interact appropriately by listening with concentration, choose language appropriate to the situation and use good manners. As children get older, learning at home will gradually become more varied and demanding. Although the emphasis will still be on parents and children working together, there should be increasing opportunities for children to develop the skills of independent learning. Much homework will be based on basic literacy and numeracy skills, often involving rote learning e.g. number facts, tables, spellings etc and regular reading sessions.

## **Guidelines**

All teachers will ensure a letter is sent home at the start of each term to specify the homework requirements and detail the curriculum coverage throughout this period. In addition teachers in each class produce a half/termly overview of topic homework that is to be completed each week. In order to encourage children to complete homework Dojo points are allocated for each activity. Children complete topic homework in their homework book which is returned to school regularly.

### **Early Years Foundations Stage (EYFS) and Year 1**

EYFS - to concentrate on Foundation Stage activities. No set time.

Typical activities would include:

- Talking – encouraging appropriate language and good listening skills.
- Reading books together and discussing the stories/information.
- Read stories, rhymes and poems to children.
- Find opportunities to count e.g. stairs, cups, plates
- Recognising sounds and practise letter sounds
- Practice in recognising high frequency words.
- Playing simple number games and board games as a family.
- Pencil control and handwriting skills.
- Research – collecting objects or information to support different areas of the curriculum, especially R.
- Online Learning – Mathletics

### **Key Stage 1**

The recommended time for homework was originally set out at 1 hour per week although government guidelines abolished these stipulations. At St James the Less we believe that 1 hour per week is reasonable but will vary as each year progresses with Year 2 children carrying out more formal and structured activities by the Spring Term at the latest. Over the year this is to include a balance of reading, spellings, other literacy work and number work.

*Typical Activities:*

#### **Year 1 to Year 2**

- Talking – encouraging appropriate language and good listening skills.
- Reading books together and discussing the stories/information.
- Read stories, rhymes and poems to children.
- Recognising sounds and practise letter sounds
- Practice in recognising and spelling high frequency words.
- Practice and recall number bonds to 10 and multiplication tables x2, x5, x10.
- Playing simple number games and board games as a family.
- Homework to reinforce and practise learning objectives.

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- Pencil control and handwriting skills.
- Research – collecting objects or information to support different areas of the curriculum, especially R.E.
- Online Learning – Mathletics / Espresso / VLE etc

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### **Key Stage 2**

#### **Years 3 & 4**

The recommended time for homework was originally set out at 1.5 hours per week which has recently been rescinded. Nonetheless, at St James the Less we feel this appropriate for our children. Over the year this is to include a balance of reading, spellings, other literacy work and number work and include occasional assignments in other subjects. Parents and Carers should expect to see a directed maths and literacy activity each week in addition to spellings, tables and reading.

#### *Typical activities:*

- Talking – encouraging appropriate language and good listening skills.
- Reading books together and discussing the stories/information.
- Read stories, rhymes and poems to children.
- Practice in spelling high/medium frequency words.
- Practice and recall number bonds to 20 and multiplication tables up to 10 x10.
- Homework to practise and reinforce learning objectives in literacy and numeracy, especially R.E.
- Research and activities for subjects other than Literacy and numeracy
- Handwriting practice.
- Additional work for children on Intervention Strategies
- Online Learning – Mathletics

#### **Years 5 & 6**

##### **Year 5**

- Talking – encouraging appropriate language and good listening skills.
- Reading for practice and/or pleasure. Discussion of books with parents/carers.
- Spelling practice activities and investigations.
- Practise and recall quickly multiplication tables up to 10 x10, including corresponding division facts e.g. I know 3 x 10 is 30 so I know 30 ÷ 3 is 10.
- Homework to practise and reinforce learning objectives in literacy and numeracy.
- Research and activities for subjects other than Literacy and numeracy, especially R.E.
- Handwriting practice.
- Additional work for children on Intervention Strategies
- Online Learning – Mathletics

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### **Year 6**

- Talking – encouraging appropriate language and good listening skills.
- Reading for pleasure. Discussion of books with parents/carers.
- Spelling practice activities and investigations.
- Practise and recall quickly multiplication tables up to 10 x 10, including corresponding division facts e.g. I know  $3 \times 10$  is 30 so I know  $30 \div 3$  is 10
- Homework to practise and reinforce learning objectives in literacy and numeracy.
- Research and activities for subjects other than Literacy and numeracy, especially R.E.
- Handwriting practice.
- Additional work for children on Intervention Strategies.
- Preparation and revision for SATs,
- Online Learning – Mathematics

The recommended time for homework is 2.5 hours per week. Over the year this is to be balanced out to include a regular weekly schedule with reading, spellings, other literacy work and number work. More work ranging across the curriculum such as literacy based projects. Each week there should be one maths and one language activity in addition to spellings, tables and reading.

### **Homework Diary Year 5 & 6**

From Year 5 onwards all children will be given a Homework Diary to record set homework and for parents to sign.

- For all years homework set needs to be regular and it should allow for it being completed over a period of time not longer than a week. As most homework follows the daily learning it is recommended that homework is completed on the day it is given and handed in the next day.

### **Home Readers**

*(See Home Reading Policy)*

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### **Parents**

Parents will be sent information about homework from their child's class teacher at the beginning of each term or each half term if preferred by the teacher.

Where possible parents and carers are asked to:-

- Provide a reasonably peaceful, suitable place in which the children can do their homework.
- With younger children the work is designed so that adults become actively involved in the activities. Where it is a reading activity the parent may read with or, at times, to the children.
- Make it clear to children that they value homework, and support the school in explaining how it can help with learning.
- Encourage children and praise them as they are working and when they have completed their homework.
- Give immediate feedback to the child on how they are doing and help them where necessary.
- Sign the homework diary where appropriate or home reading book.

The time a child spends on homework should not exceed 30 minutes at any one sitting, except where specified by the teacher in Upper Key Stage 2. During this time parents must feel able to help their child in any way that they see fit. Some children may just need a certain amount of reassurance, others more practical help.

Although all homework will be marked parents need to be aware that this may not be in the same way that other work is marked. (See section on marking).

### **Teachers**

A copy of all homework set should be kept in a master file in the classroom and dated to show when it was set.

Key Stage leaders need to liaise very carefully to ensure continuity and progression of homework tasks.

Homework should be marked quickly and feedback given to the pupils. (See note on marking and parents).

Pupils who consistently fail to return homework tasks should be noted and further action may be taken to rectify this situation. (See section on Failure to return.)

### **Marking**

Children need feedback on what they have done and some time should be set aside for this within the timetable, particularly for the older children. This may be on a Friday afternoon for example. Parents have an important role to play in giving immediate feedback to children and this is emphasised in the section on parents. Children will be encouraged, as they get older, to mark their own work. Teachers

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need to ensure that all homework is marked, though it will not always be possible for detailed marking to take place. At St James the Less we use a range of different approaches to marking work and, occasionally, this may be done collaboratively through peer marking (the children provide praise and points for improvement on each others' work)

Completed Homework is sent back home after it has been marked. This gives further immediate feedback.

Spellings: Completed spelling tests will be sent home each week to illustrate how the children have performed and, if necessary, provide an opportunity to revisit some of the words the children are still unsure about.

### **SEN**

SEN children are entitled to the same homework as their peers as often as possible. However, they may benefit from other work suited to their individual needs. This may mean that some children will receive different tasks to the rest of their class from time to time. Homework is not used as an attempt to 'catch up' with their class.

### **Failure to Return Homework**

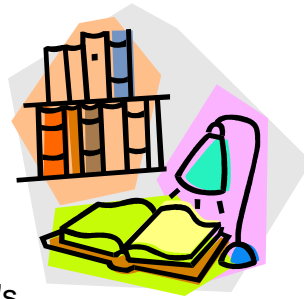
- The teacher will note children who regularly fail to bring homework back, without reasonable excuse.
- Reasons as to why this is happening will be sought.
- Parents will be contacted.
- Parents may be invited into school to discuss reasons.
- Children may be asked to complete homework at playtimes subject to parental approval

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The staff, in accordance with the notes above, will monitor the homework. The headteacher will also be checking that homework is consistently set across year groups and that the standard of Homework being set is good. St James the Less accepts that homework policies are not mandatory as specified by recent changes in education but all teachers recognise the need for a unified progression of homework expectation which will aid parents in supporting their child's learning. Teachers are encouraged to use homework to demonstrate the weekly learning taking place in their classroom.

This policy will be reviewed alongside all curriculum innovations but no less than every four years.





## 10 things you can do to help your child learn

1. Give your child confidence through lots of praise and encouragement.
    - As a parent, you have tremendous power to strengthen your child's confidence - and confidence is vital to learning.
    - Provide specific praise that focuses on a particular aspect of their work. Comments such as "I like the way you have..." is more effective than "You're clever!"
  2. Read to, and with, your child as much as possible.
    - As part of the National Year of Reading the Government is encouraging parents and carers to read to children, hear them read, or encourage them to read to themselves for at least 20 minutes a day.
  3. Encourage children to observe and talk about their surroundings.
    - Even young children can be helped to read notices and signs, for example, and understand what they mean.
  4. Make use of your local library.
    - Look out for special events and services for children.
  5. Visit museums and places you think your child might find interesting.
    - Children now have free admission to major national museums and art galleries.
  6. If your children like watching television, watch it with them sometimes and encourage them to talk about what they have seen. They will get more out of the experience.
  7. Try to set time aside to do "homework" activities with young children.
  8. Wherever possible, try to provide a reasonably quiet place for children to do homework (or help them to get to other places where homework can be done).
  9. Encourage your child to discuss homework with you, including feedback from teachers.
  10. Try to help your child to see the enjoyable aspects of homework.
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