

St Walburga's Catholic Primary School

Homework Policy

Mission Statement: At St Walburga's we celebrate that we are all members of God's loving family. We do our best to follow Jesus by putting others first. Our school is a happy and safe place where we learn, have fun together, do well and achieve our full potential'

1 Introduction

Homework is anything that 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 to support children's learning. For example, a parent who spends time reading a story to their child before bedtime is helping with homework. The Governors and Staff at St Walburga's Catholic Primary believe that homework is an important aspect of a child's education. It encourages children to realise that learning can take place outside the classroom and promotes independent learning, thus encouraging the child to take greater responsibility for their progress. Homework allows parents, carers and the school, to work in partnership for the benefit of their child.

2 Rationale for homework

Homework is a very important part of a child's education and can add much to a child's development. The government made clear its commitment to homework in the 1997 White Paper, 'Excellence in Schools', where homework was seen as an extension of a child's learning outside of the classroom. Effective homework needs to be part of a wider partnership between parents and school, providing the child with further strategies to aid his/her educational development. We believe that 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. 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 wide range of out-of-school clubs and organisations that play an important part in the lives of many children. We are well aware that children spend more time at home than at school, and we believe they develop their skills, interests and talents to the full only when parents encourage them to make maximum use of the experiences and opportunities that are available outside of school.

3 Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of homework are:

- to develop an effective partnership between the school and parents and other carers in pursuing the aims of the school.
- to consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding, particularly in literacy and numeracy and to allow children to practise skills taught in lessons
- to extend school learning, for example through additional reading; and

to encourage pupils as they get older to develop the confidence, skills and self discipline needed to study on their own, and prepare them for the requirements of secondary school.

- to enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development;
- to enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered in sufficient depth;
- to provide educational experiences not possible in school;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future.

4 Types of Homework

All homework activities should be related to work the pupils are doing at school. However, homework should not always be written work. For younger pupils it will include activities such as

- reading with parents or carers
- talking with parents about what they have done at school
- informal games to practise mathematical or other skills
- spellings

For older pupils and students, homework may include

- reading
- preparing a presentation
- finding out information
- spellings and tables
- literacy and maths activities
- carrying out a simple scientific experiment

All children need to experience a range of reading material so we ask parents not to limit home-reading with their child solely to the school reading book but to read a variety of texts on a regular basis. We give guidance information to parents to help them achieve the maximum benefit from this time spent reading with their child. Information to support reading is also posted on the school website.

5 Amount of homework

We increase the amount of homework that we give the children as they move through the school. We expect Key Stage 1 children to spend approximately one hour a week doing homework, although this may well include reading with a parent. We expect children in years 3 and 4 to spend approximately 15–20 minutes per night on homework and children in years 5 and 6 to spend approximately 30 minutes per night. This is in line with the DfEE guidelines that were issued in 1988. Children are not expected to spend significantly longer on homework than the recommended times set out above. It does not matter if activities do not take as long as the guide times, as long as they are useful. Staff will communicate with parents when children will have homework and will organise homework carefully so that children are not expected to do too much in any one day.

We give all the children in Year 5 & 6 a school diary where they or the teacher or learning support assistant (LSA) records the homework, and where parents and teachers make any relevant comments. Parents are asked to write comments and make records in school reading diaries.

6 Pupils with special educational needs

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. If a child has special needs, 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 the Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

7 The role of parents

Parents have a vital role to play in their child's education, and homework is an important part of this process. We ask parents to encourage their child to complete the homework tasks that are set. We invite them to support their children as they feel necessary and provide them with the sort of environment that allows children to do their best. Parents 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. Parents are asked to ensure that all homework is completed on time and returned to school.

In Y5/6 we ask parents to check the home/school diary at least once a week and to sign it as requested.

If parents have any problems or questions about homework they should contact their child's class teacher.

Where children miss school due to holidays being taken in term times it is school policy not to provide work to be completed during that time.

School appreciates that on occasions children are unable to attend school for prolonged periods of time for medical reasons such as broken limbs etc. In this case parents are asked to approach school for advice on how to support learning at home.

8 Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to agree and then monitor the school homework policy. This is done by the committee of the governing body that deals with curriculum issues.

Signed: **Date :** 20th January 2011

Position:

To be reviewed: