

ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

HOMework POLICY



*Christ is the centre of our school community
where we live, love and learn together.*

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.

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 essential part of good education'. We recognise that the time and resources available limit the educational experience that any school by itself can provide; children benefit greatly therefore from the mutual support of parents and teachers in encouraging them to learn both at home and at school. Indeed we see homework as an important way of establishing a successful dialogue between teachers and parents. One of the aims of our school is for children to develop as independent learners. 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.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Part of our mission at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School is to create good relationships between home and school. We believe that a strong partnership between school and home is at the heart of successful education. Regular, well-planned homework can:

- enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development;
- help pupils develop the confidence and self discipline needed to study on their own and preparing them for the requirements of secondary education;
- promote a partnership between home and school in supporting each child's learning;
- enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered in sufficient depth;
- provide educational experiences not possible in school;
- consolidate and reinforce learning done in school and to allow children to practice skills taught in lessons;
- help children develop good work habits for the future;
- provide a contact for pupil / parent interaction;
- help parents gain an insight into their child's schoolwork.
- enable work to be personalised to the interest of individual children.

TYPES OF HOMEWORK

We see homework as encompassing a wide range of possibilities. The following list gives just a few examples:

- reading with a parent;
- a family visit to a local museum;
- finishing off work from class;
- learning parts for an assembly/production:
- going swimming;
- playing games which develop their physical skills;
- undertaking individual research for a project at the local library;
- learning number facts (tables);
- memorising a poem;
- learning to ride a bicycle safely;
- ensuring musical instruments are practised;
- research using the internet (school cannot be held responsible for the content of web sites not recommended by teachers);
- cooking, gardening, making things;
- explaining how things work;
- ensuring that children have opportunities to colour, paint, draw, stick, glue, etc;

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School we provide a range of homework that is linked to the age of the child. Younger children will complete simple tasks that involve learning spellings, reading, other literacy and number work.

As the children progress through the school they will benefit from a wider range of tasks that enable them to prepare for entry to Secondary School.

The main focus for these tasks will be Literacy and Numeracy as we believe that children who regularly read to and with parents/carers benefit by gaining in confidence and fluency as readers.

We also set homework in Key Stage 2 as a means of helping the children to revise for examinations as well as to ensure that prior learning has been understood.

AMOUNT OF HOMEWORK

We increase the amount of homework that we give the children as they move through the school. In the Foundation Stage the main focus for homework is support with reading.

We expect Key Stage 1 children (Years 1 &2) 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 1998.

TIME ALLOCATION

Years 1 and 2	1.0 hour per week
Years 3 and 4	1.5 hours per week
Years 5 and 6	2.5 hours per week

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.

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 help 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.

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, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher. If their questions are of a more general nature, they should contact the headteacher. Finally, if they wish to make a complaint about the school homework policy or the way it is implemented, parents should contact the governing body.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All teaching and non-teaching staff at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School are responsible for ensuring that all pupils, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnic origin and social circumstances, have access to the whole curriculum and make the greatest possible progress.

All children have equal access to homework. Day to day monitoring of the Homework Policy and the provision of equal opportunities is the responsibility of the class teacher.

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. Parents complete a questionnaire during the school's Ofsted inspection, and our governing body pays careful consideration to any concern that is raised at that time, or in between Ofsted inspections, by any parent.

All staff will monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of the policy regularly.

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