



All Souls' Catholic
PRIMARY SCHOOL

HOMEWORK POLICY

February 2023

All Souls' Catholic Primary School

Homework Policy

Rationale

Homework is anything 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 to support the children's learning. At All Souls', we believe that homework plays an important part of a child's development and are committed to providing meaningful learning opportunities for children at home. We do however acknowledge the important role of play and free time in a child's growth and development. Homework should not prevent children from taking part in activities of various out-of-school clubs or pursuing other interests. In fact, we believe that homework should, where possible, support the development of children's wider skills, abilities and interests and should allow them the freedom to use and express themselves in ways that they choose.

Research carried out by the Education Endowment Foundation concludes that the impact of homework on children's achievement is positive and can result in 3 months or more of increased progress for children who regularly complete it. Where homework is linked carefully to classroom teaching and/or makes use of digital technology, this progress can be further increased.

With this in mind, homework at All Souls' will therefore primarily focus on reading, writing and times tables as we believe that developing a competency in these basic skills is fundamental to a child's overall academic development. Outside of this, homework set should encourage children to use their own talents or skills that they would like to develop and should be as big or small part of their time outside of school as they choose.

Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- To develop and reinforce the effective partnership between the school and parents and other carers.
- To provide an opportunity for parents to become a part of their child's education through support, supervision and encouragement.
- To increase parental understanding of the curriculum and purpose of work that is being covered in school.
- Create a consistent, progressive and whole school approach to using homework as a tool to extend children's development and provide challenge.
- To encourage pupils to develop personal responsibility for life-long learning.

Purpose

At All Souls' we believe that homework:

- Is an opportunity for children to consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding across the curriculum.
- Can give pupils the chance to access a range of resources that may not be as accessible within school.
- Can significantly contribute to the development of children's fundamental reading, writing, spelling, and numeracy skills.
- Should be designed to increasingly encourage self management and independence in learning.
- Should have equal value to work which is completed during school time.
- Should be set appropriately and proportionately to the age and abilities of the pupils.
- Should not be a burden to teachers or parents.
- Should give children the freedom to express themselves in disciplines as they choose and thus give us an even greater understanding of them, their interests and strengths.

Types of homework

Reading

Children's ability to read has a significant impact on their ability to engage fully across the curriculum and so it is therefore critical that it is given the highest of priorities. Ideally, all children should aim to read on a daily basis, for increasing amounts of time as they become more competent/older. As a minimum, we expect all children to have read with an adult for a sustained period of time a minimum of four times per week and this should be recorded in children's reading records and signed weekly by an adult. Children's reading books and reading record books should be with them, in school, each day. Reading record books are formally checked by staff on a Monday to ensure that children are reading regularly.

Children currently on the school phonics programme (Approximately Reception-Year 2)

Children who are currently receiving daily phonics and reading sessions, as part of the school's phonics programme, will receive 3 reading books simultaneously: A copy of the book being used as part of that week's phonics, an additional book matched to their phonic ability for consolidation and a 'bedtime shared reader'. Having a copy of the book that is being explored within phonics sessions allows the child to continue to practise and secure their phonics knowledge whilst, over time, being able to explore the content and meaning of the text. The additional phonics book, which has been carefully been matched to their ability, allows them to consolidate current and previously learnt phonics sounds in a text that they are not familiar with. The third book, the 'bedtime shared reader' is a book which is not part of the phonics scheme and therefore should be read together. These books, as they have not been designed with 'phonics' in mind will create a greater sense of wonder, awe and excitement as they have been written to engage children. We believe that children should have a mixed regular diet of all three of these texts so that they combine a continuous development of reading skill with an understanding of stories and love of books.

Children on the school reading scheme who have finished the phonics programme

(approx. Year 2 upwards)

Once completing the phonics programme, which may be at different times for different children, **all children** proceed onto the school reading programme which is continuously banded based upon reading ability. Children remain on the school banded scheme until they leave All Souls. Children on the reading scheme will receive a reading book, matched to their ability, which should be in school and taken home, alongside their reading record each day. Books are chosen together with school staff so that children are receiving a varied diet of different text types and quality authors. Some children may want to read their own books from home or library. This is great, and something that we would encourage, however must be in addition to the expectation of them reading the school reading book.

Please note that children of all ages benefit from reading with and to an adult so that they are continually developing their fluency, accuracy, pace and expression. Reading with an adult also opens up the possibility for discussion around the texts being read which is, in many ways, as important as reading the text itself. Parents who would like advice and support around how best to read with their child should contact their child's class teacher.

Spelling

Spelling is another very important fundamental skill, the benefits of which extend across the curriculum. Children in all year groups from Years 1-6 are asked to learn 5 words which come directly from 'common exception word' lists (KS1) or 'statutory word lists' (KS2) so that, over the course of a Key Stage, children have had multiple opportunities to practise and learn these. These words are shared weekly on a Monday and tested the following Monday.

In addition to this, in Key Stage 2, children are also introduced to and practise a 'spelling rule' each week from the school's progressive spelling programme. Children should practice and consolidate their understanding of this rule at home. They will then be tested on their ability to apply this rule as part of their spelling test on Monday. We do not supply lists of words for these rules as the intention is that children should be able to apply the rule to the many, many words to which it relates.

We would encourage parents to support children's progress in spelling by actively engaging in their learning of spellings and rules each week. Displaying the words at home replicates what is on display in the classroom and routinely asking children to spell these words with allow children to secure these over time. Once a spelling is truly learnt – it is very difficult to forget! Again, parents should seek advice from teachers if they would like support in assisting their child with spellings at home.

Multiplication facts and basic number skills

Learning multiplication facts, bonds and basic manipulation are fundamental to children's mathematical development and, for children to become successful mathematicians long term, they must secure these basics early on. The school has a subscription to Times Tables Rockstars and Numbots which is an online platform for the progressive securing of basic maths knowledge and skill. All children have individual log-ins for this service which are reissued at the beginning of each academic year. Teachers will set children a weekly task

which is linked to their current mathematical learning on either TTRS or Numbots on a Monday. It is expected that, throughout the week, children will log into this service and complete the tasks as set. As with many of these basic fundamental areas of learning, these skills are best developed through a 'little and often' approach and so we encourage children/parents to establish a regular and consistent routine of accessing this service. If technology is a barrier for children accessing these at home then parents should liaise with class teachers as the school may be able to support with the provision of devices for this purpose.

Writing

It is widely regarded that children's writing has been impacted the most by lost learning during the pandemic and attainment in writing, nationally, has seen the biggest fall. With this in mind, teachers set a weekly writing task for children in Years 1-6 which should be completed in their dedicated homework book. These tasks are set, via the book, on a Wednesday and it is expected that these books are returned, complete, on a Monday. All tasks across the school follow a similar format, with children in Key Stage 1 being asked to write up to 3 quality sentences each week and children in Key Stage 2 being asked to write 3-5 quality sentences each week. The specific task and focus set by teachers each week will be linked to the spelling, punctuation, grammar or text focus that the children are currently, or have recently been learning. This allows children to continuously and progressively practice and refine their writing skills. The focus on these tasks are to ensure quality, not quantity of writing and parents can support this process by discussing children's ideas for writing with them and then encouraging and directly supporting the editing and refining process, identifying errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling. When these books are returned to children each week, teachers will have identified, through their marking, some of the mistakes that children have made. Before beginning their weekly task, children should go back through the previous week's and correct these mistakes identified by their teacher.

Punctuation and Grammar

A weekly Grammar and Punctuation task is set for children in Years 4-6 and are delivered through an online subscription to SPaG.com which children have individual logins for. Teachers use this to set practice punctuation and grammar questions for children in their class to consolidate their learning at home alongside the specific objectives that are being taught in school. As with other aspects of homework, if technology is a barrier to children completing this, parents are encouraged to contact the school.

Faith development tasks

As part of the school's Catholic Life and Collective worship children across the school are set a termly 'project' based task for them to complete, over time, at home. These may be linked to learning within the classroom, Sacramental preparation or wider whole school development priorities. When these are set, information detailing the task, what is expected and time frames will be issued to parents. For the vast majority of these tasks the outcome is not predetermined so that children can choose to represent these in their own, creative ways. Where appropriate, upon returning these pieces of work to school, children will have an opportunity to share their work with others around the school.

SATs revision and booster work

As part of their preparation for life at Secondary school and to allow them the chance to consolidate their learning from across Key Stage 2, children in Year 6 may be provided with additional revision and booster work to support their progress in Reading, Writing and/or Maths. These may be as part of booster sessions delivered to groups of specific children or through the use of revision materials, such as those from CGP. Where teachers choose to set these, consideration will be given to the overall amount of homework being issued to a child and the potential impact that such tasks will have. Teachers will communicate the expectations around these activities with parents.

Note regarding term-time holidays

Please note that if parents choose to take holidays during term time, teachers will not respond to requests for work for children to complete during these holidays. Equally, if a child is absent from school as they are deemed to poorly to attend, teachers will not respond to requests from parents for work to be set.

Long-term absence

Should a child be required to remain absent from school for an extended period of time, for example as a result of a medical condition, injury or for safeguarding reasons, the school will provide work and learning opportunities for the child at home. This may be through the school's learning platform, Google Classroom, or in printed hard copy format – whichever will work best for the particular child/situation.

Summary of homework expectations and progression

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Reading	4 times per week minimum (10-15mins each time). Recorded in reading log and checked on Monday	4 times per week minimum (10-15 mins each time). Recorded in reading log and checked on Monday	4 times per week minimum (10-15 mins each time). Recorded in reading log and checked on Monday	4 times per week minimum (10-20 mins each time). Recorded in reading log and checked on Monday	4 times per week minimum (15-20+ mins each time). Recorded in reading log and checked on Monday	4 times per week minimum (20+ mins each time). Recorded in reading log and checked on Monday
	<i>Minimum 40 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 40 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 40 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 1 hour per week</i>	<i>Minimum 1 hour 15 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 1 hour 20 mins per week</i>
Spelling	5 common exception words set Monday – practiced little and often throughout the week	5 common exception words set Monday – practiced little and often throughout the week	5 statutory word lists words set and spelling rule learned Monday – practiced little and often throughout the week	5 statutory word lists words set and spelling rule learned Monday – practiced little and often throughout the week	5 statutory word lists words set and spelling rule learned Monday – practiced little and often throughout the week	5 statutory word lists words set and spelling rule learned Monday – practiced little and often throughout the week
	<i>Minimum 15 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 15 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 20 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 20 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 30 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 30 mins per week</i>
Fundamental Maths	Task on Numbots on Monday – practiced little and often throughout the week	Task on Numbots or TTRS on Monday – practiced little and often throughout the week	Task on Numbots or TTRS on Monday – practiced little and often throughout the week	Task on Numbots or TTRS on Monday – practiced little and often throughout the week	Task on Numbots or TTRS on Monday – practiced little and often throughout the week	Task on Numbots or TTRS on Monday – practiced little and often throughout the week
	<i>Minimum 15 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 15 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 20 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 20 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 20 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 20 mins per week</i>
Writing	1-3 sentences completed in homework book – task set Wednesday and returned Monday	1-3 sentences completed in homework book – task set Wednesday and returned Monday	3-5 sentences completed in homework book – task set Wednesday and returned Monday	3-5 sentences completed in homework book – task set Wednesday and returned Monday	3-5 sentences completed in homework book – task set Wednesday and returned Monday	3-5 sentences completed in homework book – task set Wednesday and returned Monday
	<i>Minimum 15 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 15 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 15 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 15 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 20 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 20 mins per week</i>
Punctuation & Grammar				Single task set via SPAG.com on Monday to be completed by following Monday	Single task set via SPAG.com on Monday to be completed by following Monday	Single task set via SPAG.com on Monday to be completed by following Monday
				<i>Minimum 10 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 10 mins per week</i>	<i>Minimum 10 mins per week</i>
Faith Projects	Termly task set over a minimum of four weeks	Termly task set over a minimum of four weeks	Termly task set over a minimum of four weeks	Termly task set over a minimum of four weeks	Termly task set over a minimum of four weeks	Termly task set over a minimum of four weeks
	<i>Minimum of 1 hour across the project</i>	<i>Minimum of 1 hour across the project</i>	<i>Minimum of 1 hour across the project</i>	<i>Minimum of 1 hour across the project</i>	<i>Minimum of 2 hours across the project</i>	<i>Minimum of 2 hours across the project</i>
Additional						Additional tasks as part of preparation for End of Key Stage / Secondary School for revision/ consolidation purpose
						<i>Up to a maximum of 1 hour per week</i>
Weekly Time expectations	Approx 1 hour 30 mins per week	Approx 1 hour 30 mins per week	Approx 1 hour 40 mins per week	Approx 2 hours 10 mins per week	Approx 2 hour 40 mins per week	Approx 3 hours per week

Expectations

- It is expected that all homework holds the same value as work which is completed within school.
- Homework of all forms should be appropriate to both the age and ability of the pupils
- Children are expected to take responsibility for their homework and where they have been absent from school, it is their responsibility to ensure that they are aware of any homework tasks that they have missed including weekly spellings.
- Teachers are to ensure that pupils are taking home appropriate reading books and to monitor the frequency that children are reading at home.
- Children who fail to complete homework, or submit work which does not meet a teacher's expectations will be asked to repeat the work or complete it during a break/lunch time in school. This does not apply to Faith based tasks which we encourage children to complete, but do not insist.
- It is an expectation that all children are reading at home. If a child is not reading and recording the amount as specified in this policy, they will be asked to stay in at play / lunchtimes and read to make up the required time.
- If children do not have access to electronic devices at home to complete online tasks, parents are asked to let the class teacher know before the deadline so that alternative arrangements can be made.

Monitoring and review

- It is the duty of the senior leadership team to monitor and review all homework, as well as this policy.
- This policy should be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that homework continues to be purposeful and meets the changing needs of our children, whole school development priorities and government requirements.
- As part of the monitoring and review cycle, the views of children, parents and teachers with regard to homework will be sought and considered on an annual basis – and more frequently if required.