

HOME LEARNING POLICY

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as
for the Lord and not for men”
Colossians 3:23



At The Cathedral Catholic School we are safe and cared for; we make Christ known and loved, using his example to strive for excellence in all we do.

In close partnership with parents and the parish of The Cathedral and St Thomas More, we aim to deliver an outstanding and distinctive Catholic education with Christ at its heart. Each person's unique value is recognised and nurtured so that, through God's grace we can grow, learn and realise our full potential.

We use our gifts and talents for the glory of God and in the loving service of others, proclaiming the Gospel and striving for the values of the Kingdom of God.

We profess our faith proudly and recognise that we are called to a loving relationship with God through the sacraments, scripture and prayer.

The purpose of home learning is:

- Develop a learning link with families and a shared understanding of pupil progress
- To improve and develop study skills, including personal responsibility and independence, that can secure success for pupils in the future
- To offer opportunities for children to explore their learning in broader more creative contexts
- To consolidate and reinforce children's skills, knowledge and understanding, particularly in English and Maths
- To prepare children in Year 6 for their transition to secondary schools.

We recognise that the purpose of home learning changes as children grow older. In the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1, the emphasis is placed upon developing a partnership with parents and carers and involving them actively in children's learning with activities such as reading, spelling, games and number facts. During Key Stage 2 there is greater emphasis upon providing opportunities for children to develop the skills of independent learning from a variety of sources. Thus, by Year 6, the home learning schedule is regular, covering a wide range of tasks and curriculum content thereby ensuring a smooth transition to Key Stage 3. At The Cathedral Catholic Primary School, home learning is used regularly as a means to enhance learning for all children. Children will be positively encouraged to complete home learning tasks for their own benefit, although non-statutory and therefore non-compulsory.

Home learning plays a vital role in linking learning in school with learning at home. Completing tasks on a regular basis as children grow older allows them to embed key study skills that will enable them to be successful in their future. In addition, it offers children and families an opportunity to share in the learning process, extending and consolidating key learning from school, often in fun and engaging, creative ways. Home learning strengthens the link between home and school and also allows parents and families an opportunity to further understand the learning their child is involved in at school. Parents will discover how their children learn and what they learn, and how well they are progressing.

How much home learning?

Whilst we appreciate the value of home learning, it is equally important that children of all ages need time to develop through a wide range of activities such as play, participating in clubs, etc. It is, therefore, important that children should not be overburdened with formal home learning. On the other hand, children researching independently on topics that interest them will be building invaluable skills for the future. As a rough guide, we recommend that children might be asked to spend the following amount of time doing home learning:

Reception: There is no set time for children in the Reception class

Year 1 and Year 2: About one hour per week.

Year 3 and Year 4: About one and a half hours per week.

Year 5 and Year 6: About two and a half hours per week.

What is home learning?

Home learning activities should be planned for and support the curriculum. It is beneficial to both parents and children if a weekly pattern is set. Demands of home learning need to be manageable to all concerned. Some tasks may be being completed over an extended period of time. The environment and having the correct equipment is vitally important to success in completing home learning. Children should not be hungry, thirsty, tired, distracted or upset when completing home learning. Try to ensure that they are well rested; fed and placed in an area that does not have TV/media/computer game distractions. Ensure that they have a pencil, some coloured pencils, a ruler and a pencil sharpener as basic equipment. Get into a routine; under no circumstance is home learning beneficial if it is done under stress as this becomes a punishment for all concerned. Parents need to use their discretion as to how home learning is affecting family life and you know your child the best of all. We want to encourage pupils to do home learning and therefore will use a range of positive ways to celebrate the work they have done. In the event of not completing the home learning task, we will speak to parents to see how we can move forward from this.

Organisation and Expectations

Where possible regular routines and expectations for the completion of tasks are set in place by the class teacher, including reward schemes to advocate and reward the completion of home learning tasks.

Reading will always remain of paramount importance regardless of the child's stage in their school career. It is expected that children will read with an adult every day. It is also expected that pupils will spend some time each week learning their times tables, as directed by their teacher.

The guidelines below outline the type and amount of home learning parents can expect pupils to receive in different year groups at The Cathedral Catholic Primary School. Additional, individualised home learning tasks may be set based on individual need or parental request. A sheet of suggested activities will be sent home with each child at the beginning of the half term.

Reception	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading books to be read daily• Tricky words
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily reading at home• Spellings linked to phonic phases• One section per week (at least) of the First Mental Arithmetic Book (Hand in on Wednesday)
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily reading at home• Spellings (Friday – Friday)• One section per week (at least) of the First Mental Arithmetic Book (Hand in on Wednesday)
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily reading at home• Practice weekly spellings (Friday – Friday)• One section per week (at least) of the Mental Arithmetic Book (Hand in on Wednesday)• 3 of the suggested activities to be completed throughout the half term. Each half term the homework is based on the current project or theme (Hand in the Monday after ½ term)
Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily reading at home• Practice weekly spellings (Friday – Friday)• One section per week (at least) of the Mental Arithmetic Book (Hand in on Wednesday)• 4 of the suggested activities to be completed throughout the half term. Each half term the homework is based on the current project or theme (Hand in the Monday after ½ term)
Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily reading at home• Practice weekly spellings (Friday – Friday)• One section per week (at least) of the Mental Arithmetic Book (Hand in on Wednesday)• 5 of the suggested activities to be completed throughout the half term. Each half term the homework is based on the current project or theme (Hand in the Monday after ½ term)
Year 6 (until February)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily reading at home• Practice weekly spellings (Friday – Friday)• One section per week (at least) of the Mental Arithmetic Book (Hand in on Wednesday)• 6 of the suggested activities to be completed throughout the half term. Each half term the homework is based on the current project or theme. (Hand in the Monday after ½ term)

All teachers and year groups advocate the use of ICT based resources to extend and consolidate learning. Specific ICT resources paid for by school include:

- 'Rapid Reading '

- ‘Abacus Active Learn’ – all children in school are provided with access to this resource by class teachers. Teachers in school can access progress reports and assessment information linked to these activities. In addition, children can access a number of additional non-subscription learning web resources, such as ‘BBC Learning’ independently or through links on the school website.

Inclusion

It is important that children with special educational needs have an opportunity to benefit from home learning appropriate to their needs. This may mean that some children are asked to do home learning which is separate from the home learning set for the rest of the class.

Feedback on home learning

It is important that home learning tasks are worthwhile and that children receive feedback on their work. Feedback will often be given:

- Through praise marking (pink pen). Any growth comments will be given to the pupil verbally and any major issues will be discussed with pupils and parent together.
- As children do the follow up work
- Through class discussion
- Through group discussion
- Partnership with parents

All parents are encouraged to read to and with their children as much as possible and to encourage and support their children in the completion of home learning tasks. In order to receive feedback from parents all children have either a reading diary or a school planner where parents can add their comments. These should be viewed regularly by both parents and teachers.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The impact of home learning will be monitored through:

- Discussion at staff, curriculum and key stage meetings.
- Discussion with a sample of pupils across the ability range
- Looking at a sample of school planners

In the light of the information gathered the policy will be evaluated in terms of:

- How manageable it is.
- The impact upon children’s attitude to learning.
- The impact upon children’s progress.