

Homework Policy

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Headteacher

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review due – May 2027

Trinity St Stephen Homework Policy

It is a primary aim of our school that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well. We are a caring community, whose values are built on mutual trust and respect for all. This policy reflects our Christian values and ensures the ethos of all achieving and thriving permeates everything we do.

The objective of this policy is to clearly outline the purpose of homework at Trinity St Stephen First School, the way it is organised and the expectations of pupils, staff and parents.

1. Introduction

Homework is a valuable element of the teaching and learning process and children are encouraged to work at home on a regular basis. Regular homework is important as it gives pupils the opportunity to practise at home tasks done in class, to undertake more detailed research and to further develop specific skills. It also helps pupils to become confident, independent learners, building skills they will need throughout their time at school and into adult life.

However, it must be remembered that children have worked very hard at their lessons and many of them, particularly the younger ones, will be tired at the end of the school day. Expecting them to tackle large amounts of homework in the evening would not be appropriate.

Similarly, spending quality time with parents, sharing all manner of activities, is essential for children.

2. Definition

Homework is work which is set to be completed outside the normal working day and timetabled curriculum. Homework is usually related directly to work being studied in school. It is a period of independent study which might, where appropriate, involve parental support or input.

3. Aim

The aim of this policy is to ensure a consistent approach to homework at Trinity St Stephen First School to maximise the learning opportunities for the children.

4. Purpose of Homework

The purpose of homework is to:

- Extend school learning, thus playing an important part in raising standards;
- Consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding;
- Develop independent learning skills;
- Develop self-discipline and personal organisation;
- Develop home-school partnerships.

5. General Principles

The amount and type of homework set will vary according to the age of the child. Teachers usually establish a routine and pattern of setting and collecting homework as well as giving feedback to the children about their completed work. Further details of this can be found in the Class News on our website. Advice is also available on the school website to support parents in helping their children with reading and mathematics.

Our aim is that homework should be:

- structured and the purpose explained clearly to the pupils;
- appropriate for all pupils, including those with any special needs;
- given consistently across the school;
- marked to acknowledge effort and achievement and is returned in a timely manner. Common misconception will be addressed within school.

In addition, homework will be:

- varied from subject to subject, and varied within each subject;
- manageable within a reasonable timeframe;
- challenging and purposeful;
- recognised and valued by teachers and parents;
- recognised as being important by the pupil;
- excluded as a punishment. However, pupils may be set work to complete at home if they have wasted time in class.

The support of parents/carers is seen as essential; it is hoped that parents will support their children at home, through monitoring and providing encouragement.

6. Types of Homework

The type of homework set may include reading, learning spellings, writing, mathematics, learning multiplication tables, researching information for project work, collecting items or articles for various lessons. Occasional work may be set in other subjects. It will depend on the year group of the children.

In some instances, older children may be given additional project work to carry out in the school holidays.

The aim is to establish the foundation of good practice, with regard to homework, developing it progressively across the key stages. Homework will increase in variety and amount as the children move through the school.

7. Recommended Times for Homework

There are no current guidelines from the DFE on homework, but our experience and past guidelines have suggested the following:

Reception home learning (Up to 45 minutes per week)

Weekly phonics – sounds, tricky words (in sound books)

Weekly reading books plus word lists

Show and tell preparation

Optional home learning related to the weekly focus which is on the class news

Year 1 (1 hour per week)

Reading, spelling, other literacy and number work.

Reading should be part of a daily routine and be a minimum of 10 minutes.

Year 2 (1 hour per week)

Reading, spelling, other literacy and number work.

Reading should be part of a daily routine and be a minimum of 10 minutes.

Years 3 & 4 (1.5 hours per week)

Literacy and numeracy as for Years 1 & 2, with occasional assignments in other subjects.

Reading should be part of a daily routine and be a minimum of 15 minutes.

However, the emphasis is on how homework helps children to learn, rather than on whether it takes a certain amount of time. For example, some children will work quicker than others and get more done in less time.

8. Taking Responsibility

Being responsible for looking after books and materials which are taken home, and also for ensuring the return of articles to school, is an important part of the homework process.

9. How can parents help?

It is hoped that parents will give their active support to our Homework Policy. Children who receive regular support and encouragement from home make the best progress at school. The setting of homework allows parents to have direct involvement in their child's learning. Parents are welcome to discuss homework issues informally, with teachers, or at parents' evenings.

Parents can help their children in many ways, but particularly by:

- listening to them read or by reading to them, every day if possible.
(Regular reading practice is an essential part of the homework schedule - further guidance on this is given in annex 1);
- checking to see if they have homework to do;
- encouraging them to work in a comfortable and quiet area of the house;
- asking to look at the finished work and by being positive in their praise;
- acknowledging the effort that their children have made by initialling a reading record book, a tables/spelling book or other piece of work;
- helping, if children get stuck, but not actually doing the work for them. This is important in mathematics as some of the methods and techniques used by pupils may be different from those used by parents.
- Encouraging their child to communicate with the class teacher or doing this on behalf of the child depending on the child's age if there are any particular concerns or problems with homework. If it is clear that pupils are experiencing difficulty with the work a short note to the teacher would help to draw attention to the problem.

10. Children with Special Needs

Homework set is differentiated to reflect the different ability levels within the class; this may be through the setting of different activities or differing expectations of outcome. From time to time, pupils with special needs may be set additional or different homework, in order to reinforce a particular skill or area of learning. Homework may also be set by a support teacher or teaching assistant.

11. Expectations

The school has the following expectations, in line with our Home-School agreement:

Teachers will:

- ensure that homework is an integral part of the curriculum and is planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of learning;
- provide parents with a homework schedule at the start of the school year;
- ensure that homework is marked in a timely manner in line with the school's Marking and Feedback policy.

Pupils will:

- at an appropriate age, record homework tasks, demonstrate a commitment to spending an allocated time doing the tasks set and hand the work back on time;
- complete their homework to the best of their ability.

Parents will:

- support their child's learning by helping their children at home, monitoring homework and providing encouragement and guidance;
- provide feedback on the homework, if necessary, by writing in their child's reading record book, on the homework sheet or in a homework diary;
- inform the class teacher if an issue arises.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation

This Homework policy will be promoted throughout the school, made available to parents and carers on the school website and its implementation and effectiveness will be regularly reviewed. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the Senior Management Team to monitor its implementation and to report to the Governing Body.

13. In Conclusion

It is hoped that this information explains the expectations the school has of its pupils. Further clarification of any aspects of the policy can be obtained by contacting class teachers.

14. Policy Review

Review to be undertaken every three years.

Trinity St Stephen First School acknowledges the use of materials prepared by Cavendish Primary School and St Margaret Clitherow Primary School in the preparation of this updated policy.

Annex 1 - Helping Your Child with Reading

Parents play a vital role in helping their child to read.

Trinity St Stephen First School Homework Policy expects that all children will read with an adult at home every day. Each child has a reading record book or homework diary that parents should use to record their comments and observations about their child's reading.

From a very young age children enjoy sharing books with adults. Reading a story to a child helps them to feel loved, to understand the structure of stories and to experience excitement and adventure in a safe environment. Even fluent readers enjoy being read to.

It is also important to hear children read.

In the Early Years this progresses from discussing the pictures, modelling reading the words and talking about the text to recognising sounds, words and phrases.

As children become more fluent in their reading the adult's role changes, the child reads more independently, with the parent discussing the book and checking understanding of key vocabulary and comprehension of the text. Children should be asked questions about the book, such as what has happened so far, what may happen next or what information they recall. They should be encouraged to be aware of punctuation and how it helps to make sense of what they are reading. They should also be encouraged to read with expression, varying the tone of their voice.

Another important role of the parent is to show they enjoy reading by being seen to read for pleasure themselves. This shows children that reading is valued within the family.