

# Ursuline

## *Catholic Primary School*



### Homework Policy November 2019

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Reviewed:  
Nov 2022

Reviewed by: M McQueen (Head) & Gov Body

Status: Active

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Date Agreed:

Next Review:

## INTRODUCTION

At Ursuline Catholic Primary School we believe 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 and parents/carers to support the children's learning.

## RATIONALE FOR HOMEWORK

Homework can be an important part of a child's education, and can add much to their development. We see homework as an important example of cooperation between teachers and parents/carers. One of the aims of our teaching is for children to develop as independent learners, and we believe that doing homework is one of the main ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning.

Homework can play a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. However, 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 activities of various out-of-school clubs and of other organisations that play an important part in the lives of our pupils. We are well aware that children spend more time at home than at school and we believe that they develop their interests and skills to the full only when parents/carers encourage them to make maximum use of the opportunities available outside school. We also acknowledge that too much homework, which seems lacking in purpose and clarity can have a detrimental effect on children's confidence and the quality of family life. In line with this school will ensure that:

- children will always have at least three days to complete and return homework to school
- the setting of homework will be flexible around days in the calendar that families may wish to mark or celebrate (e.g. Halloween, Bonfire Night, Shrove Tuesday)
- when setting homework teachers will be sensitive to family celebrations, e.g. birthdays
- Homework will not be set the night before or the night after an educational visit
- Homework will be optional during school holidays

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of homework are:

- to enable pupils to make maximum progress
- to help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner;
- to promote cooperation between home and school in supporting each child's learning;
- to enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered in sufficient depth;
- to provide educational experiences not possible in school;
- to consolidate and reinforce the learning done in school, and to allow children to practise skills taught in lessons;
- to help children develop good work habits for the future.

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## **INCLUSION AND HOMEWORK**

We recognise that children have individual learning styles, which means that some tasks can be completed in a number of different ways, while others demand a particular approach.

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, and 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 their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

We value and celebrate the cultural diversity of our pupils and their families, and we appreciate the enrichment that this brings.

## **THE ROLE OF TEACHERS**

- ensure children receive constructive feedback regarding the quality and attainment of completed tasks
- encourage all children through praise and recognition of individual efforts
- send home forecasts of topics and curriculum targets for literacy and numeracy at the start of each half term
- respond, where appropriate, to parent/carer comments in homework comment book
- discuss any problems with the child (or parent/carer, if appropriate) as they arise
- keep to agreed days and times for setting and collecting work
- give work which allows children to reinforce, improve or extend learning
- provide tasks which are matched to a child's ability and learning style
- vary the tasks to make the work more stimulating and enjoyable
- explain clearly the purpose of the task and how to complete it

## **THE ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS**

Parents/carers have a vital role to play in their child's education, and homework is an important part of this process. We ask parents/carers to encourage their child to complete the homework tasks that are set. We invite them to help their children with homework as and when they feel it to be necessary. We take the view that children are likely to get more out of an activity if parents/carers get involved - as long as they don't take over too much!

Parents/carers can support their child by providing a good working space at home and by discussing the work that their child is doing.

We encourage parents/carers to read the half termly forecasts of topics and curriculum targets for literacy and numeracy. These will provide the context in which homework is set.

Parents/carers are welcome to write comments to the class teacher in the homework comment book to provide feedback on, or seek clarification, about homework.

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We ask that parents/carers keep school up to date with changes in their domestic internet connectivity (see below **THE SCHOOL'S HOMEWORK PROVISION** for explanation).

We also ask that they carefully monitor how long in any one evening children are spending (in total) on homework. The following are approximate guidelines:

Reception	10 minutes
Y1-2	15-20 minutes
Y3-4	25-30 minutes
Y5-6	40-45 minutes

Parents/carers should note that medical experts recommend that children should spend no more than thirty minutes at a time looking at a computer screen.

## **THE SCHOOL'S HOMEWORK PROVISION**

Homework will be set in English, Mathematics and Research. The school has access to a number of high quality 'on-line' resources, which effectively support children's learning. The school website provides links to these and they will be used increasingly as part of our homework provision. The school will take into consideration the ICT connectivity available in the homes of different families and will, where possible, make alternative arrangements for the completion of 'on-line' homework. In support of this the Smart Rules for E-Safety are attached as an appendix to this policy and may also be found on the school website. The safety of our children is paramount in all matters regarding Internet use. We advise parents/carers to always supervise their child's access to the Internet.

Please note that Y2 and Y6 pupils may be set homework as a means of helping them to prepare for their National end of Key Stage Statutory Assessments (SATs). Similar arrangements may put in place to help prepare Y1 pupils for the National Phonics Screening check.

### ***English***

Reading at home is a central component of a pupil's development as a reader.

Regardless of a pupil's stage of development teachers will regularly send home, with a particular reading book, reading 'prompts'. These prompts are linked to the pupil's current reading target and are designed to help them to move on to the next stage in their development.

'Big Talk' homework fits in with the school's Writing cycle. Pupils will be sent home with 'Big Talk' homework as they approach the end of a unit and before they re-visit the previous unit. 'Big Talk' homework should happen at least once every half term. The ideas discussed at home are integrated into the preparations for a Extended Writing.

Within Bug Club pupils can access an 'on-line' library of books that are set at a level that closely matches their ability. The texts are motivating and cover a wide range of text types. They are designed to be read with little or no support, even by the

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youngest pupils. The built in assessment activities are closely matched to learning within school.

Spelling City provides pupils with on line opportunities to practise spellings in a variety of ways including games, puzzles and within the context of sentences. Pupils can access spellings that have been set by their teacher and enter their own into the system for independent study.

### ***Mathematics***

Times Tables are tested weekly, with the aim that children improve on each week's personal performance. Homework is sent home weekly for each pupil to practise the tables they are learning and for them to recognise the corresponding division number sentences.

MyMaths is a comprehensive range of on-line Mathematics lessons and homework activities, covering a significant amount of the Mathematics curriculum. Pupils can access work set for them by their teacher and are able to use the built in lessons, should they need additional help. In addition, pupils can work independently by selecting work that matches their current targets. The system is designed to make searching for these booster activities quick and easy.

'Abacus:the Zone' can be accessed from within 'Bug Club'. It includes games which particularly support early mathematical development.

### ***Research***

One piece of research homework, linked to current topic work, will be set in each term. The format may vary, e.g. pupils may be asked to create a 3D model, or prepare a PowerPoint presentation. Structured classroom activities will be organised over an extended period of time to then discuss and evaluate each pupil's work. Pupils will learn about research carried out by other pupils and will be asked to then teach some of the information they learn to members of their own family. Classes will also be able to showcase their findings (e.g. in assembly and/or to other classes).

It may be that a class generates, through its evaluation of a set piece of research, another related 'spin-off' piece of research. If this happens the outcomes of pupils' efforts will be evaluated as described above.

### ***Games***

Every year group may periodically send games home to support and extend work being done in school. This is also intended to provide families with a fun experience and opportunities to talk, the value of which cannot be overstated.

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## 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. They may, for example, request a report from the Head Teacher on the way in which homework is organised in the school.

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