

St Monica's Catholic Primary School

Homework Policy

At St Monica's School we believe in the value of homework.

- We believe that a child's education flourishes best when there is a shared responsibility and cooperation between the school and a child's parents or guardians. Homework, or work at home, allows for this to happen.
- It has been demonstrated that children make greater progress with reading when they are listened to and have the opportunity to discuss books regularly at home.
- The curriculum within the school is extremely demanding on time. Homework allows for consolidation of skills and information learnt at school and the learning of skills that will have a beneficial impact on school work eg handwriting practice, learning times tables.
- Homework can be a useful discipline for the student. Well structured and guided investigative work can help produce self-reliant and self-motivated pupils.

The following things are important for homework to be valued appropriately.

- Homework is not to be set because parents want to keep their children occupied.
- Parents/carers will provide their child with a quiet space to complete their homework where they can concentrate, ideally without the interruption of TV, video games etc.
- Homework should support the delivered curriculum.
- There should be adequate explanation/guidance for each exercise.
- Adequate time should be allowed for completion of work set for homework.
- No homework will be set over school holidays.
- At certain times during the year the regular setting of homework may cease eg learning words in preparation for Christmas concerts or a class assembly.
- Homework should take the pupils a reasonable length of time. If any parent feels that their child is spending too long on set homework, they should speak to the class teacher.
- Teachers may set additional work when appropriate and at their discretion.
- Children may be set individual work to meet their needs, for example if additional practice is needed for handwriting, spellings or maths. This is to ensure they do not become demotivated by work that is too difficult.
- Any work set on worksheets will be marked and returned to children.
- Children are expected to try and work on their own homework independently. We respectfully request that parents do not do the homework for their child. If children have struggled to complete work, please write a note and return it to the class teacher.

Each Year Group will set the following work each week:-

Reception Class

Be aware that homework for Reception children will gradually build up over the course of their first year at school.

- Parents to read daily to their child.
- Initially children to practise individual phonics on a daily basis (sound rings) leading to parents hearing their child read daily (sight words on the ring to start with).
- Practise at forming and writing letters of the alphabet.
- Number formation and oral counting

Year 1

- Parents to read daily *to* their child.
- Parents hearing their child read daily with an equal amount of time spent hearing the reading as discussing the book and developing the child's comprehension.
- Learning spellings which will be tested with a weekly spelling test. The score from the test will be written onto the homework sheet the following week.
- MyMaths number activity or a worksheet if the MyMaths is not appropriate/applicable.
- Regularly practise number bonds ie number bonds to 5 = 1+4, 2+3, 5+0, number bonds to 6 = 1+5, 2+4, 3+3, 6+0 etc up to number bonds to 20 ie 11+9, 12+8 etc
- Regularly practise counting in twos, fives and tens ie 2, 4, 6, 8..... 5, 10, 15, 20.... 10, 20, 30, 40...
- Leading to learning times tables for x2, x5 and x10 when they are able ie $1 \times 2 = 2$, $2 \times 2 = 4$ etc

Year 2

- Parents to read daily *to* their child.
- Parents hearing their child read daily with an equal amount of time spent hearing the reading as discussing the book and developing the child's comprehension.
- Learning spellings which will be tested with a weekly spelling test. The score from the test will be - written onto the homework sheet the following week.
- MyMaths number activity or a worksheet if the MyMaths is not appropriate/applicable.
- Regularly practise number bonds ie number bonds to 5 = 1+4, 2+3, 5+0, number bonds to 6 = 1+5, 2+4, 3+3, 6+0 etc up to number bonds to 20 ie 11+9, 12+8 etc.
- Regularly practise times tables. By the end of Year 2 they should be fluent in x2, x5 and x10. Once they are fluent in these, begin x3 and x4 tables.

Year 3

- Parents to continue to read to their children on a regular basis.
- Parents hearing their child read regularly with an equal amount of time spent hearing the reading as discussing the book and developing the child's comprehension.
- Learning spellings which will be tested with a weekly spelling test. The children will also have the spellings tested through a weekly dictation.
- MyMaths number activity or a worksheet if the MyMaths is not appropriate/applicable.
- Regularly practise times tables. By the end of Year 3 they should be fluent in x2, x3, x4, x5, x8 and x10 and understand the inverse ie if $2 \times 3 = 6$ then $6 \div 2 = 3$.

Year 4

- Parents to continue to read to their children on a regular basis.
- Parents hearing their child read regularly with an equal amount of time spent hearing the reading as discussing the book and developing the child's comprehension.
- Learning spellings which will be tested with a weekly dictation.
- MyMaths number activity or a worksheet if the MyMaths is not appropriate/applicable.
- Regularly practise times tables. By the end of Year 4 they should be fluent in x2, x3, x4, x5, x6, x7, x8, x9, x10, x11 and x12 and understand all the inverse of each multiplication ie if $6 \times 8 = 48$, $48 \div 6 = 8$.

Year 5

- Parents to continue to read to their children on a regular basis.
- Parents hearing their child read regularly with an equal amount of time spent hearing the reading as discussing the book and developing the child's comprehension.
- Learning spellings which will be tested with a weekly dictation.
- MyMaths number activity or a worksheet if the MyMaths is not appropriate/applicable.
- Continue to practise times tables on a regular basis so that they are fluent in all of them and understand the inverse of each multiplication.
- An English exercise on grammar or reading comprehension will be given each week.

Year 6

- Parents to continue to read to their children on a regular basis.
- Parents hearing their child read regularly with an equal amount of time spent hearing the reading as discussing the book and developing the child's comprehension.
- Learning spellings which will be tested with a weekly dictation.
- MyMaths number activity or a worksheet if the MyMaths is not appropriate/applicable.
- Continue to practise times tables on a regular basis so that they are fluent in all of them and understand the inverse of each multiplication.
- An English exercise on grammar or reading comprehension will be given each week.

All Year Groups

In addition once every half term, every year group will set additional work.

- One piece of RE work. This may take the form of discussing something at home for example their Baptism. It may be a prayer to write or research to carry out, a poster to make that links with the half termly RE topic etc. (This is in addition to the Class Prayer Book which is sent to children on a rota during the year.)
- One piece of topic work. This will link with one of the following subjects: Science, History, Geography, Art or Design & Technology (DT).

Thinking differently about homework

It is important to develop a range of skills while children are growing and developing. Sitting with your child and spending some time together or encouraging them to develop a skill or hobby is far more productive than ploughing through worksheets. Learning an instrument or playing sport (even just running around in the park) are excellent activities with proven benefits. You can never underestimate the importance of playing games with children and giving them the opportunity to learn other skills such as:

- taking turns
- waiting patiently
- thinking logically
- reasoning
- developing memory skills
- developing fine motor skills (ie manipulating small objects, sewing, knitting, lego, jigsaw puzzles)
- developing gross motor skills (ie large movements, balance, coordinating whole body – any sport)

Get the children to read the instructions to games. Play games that involve number and sequencing; card games are great for this. Chat to your children while playing games and find out what they have liked/disliked about school that day. Encourage your child to speak in full sentences which will then help their reading and creative writing. This does of course require a lot more effort on behalf of the parents, than sitting them in front of an iPad or a worksheet, but the benefits are far greater.

Some suggested popular games:

Snap, jigsaw puzzles, Happy Families, snakes and ladders, Uno, Bingo, Connect 4, Ludo, draughts, dominos, scrabble, Guess Who?, Cluedo, Monopoly, Jenga, chess, I went to market...(reinforces memory as well as the alphabet)

Academic work:

If you want to do more academic work, there are age appropriate work books available from WHSmith or Amazon. "Bond" books are good for general maths and English. With all these books, the answers are in the back so easy for parents to mark.