

Home-Learning Policy

St Mark's Catholic Primary School



1. Introduction

At St Mark's we believe that home-learning should help your child to reinforce the learning that has taken place at school or prepare them for new learning.

Common homework activities in primary schools tend to be reading or practising spelling and number facts, but may also include more extended activities to develop inquiry skills or more directed and focused work such as revision for tests.

In addition, homework creates a partnership between school and family, giving parents an insight into what their child is learning.

The aim of St Mark's homework policy is

- To support parents/carers to have a positive effect on homework completion and help children to develop effective learning habits.
- To consolidate and extend learning that has taken place in the classroom
- To provide opportunity for revision
- To develop fluency and embed key number facts, spelling
- To foster a love of reading.
- To explore and discover facts through projects, giving children an opportunity to explore learning in an unstructured setting, encouraging them to be independent and follow their own lines of enquiry.
- To prepare pupils for end of phase Statutory tests

2. Home-learning expectations

Reception children are issued with a reading book to bring home and share with the family. Sight words and sounds are sent home daily. Number facts to learn or a challenge like finding family shoes and placing them in order of size then sending in a photo are also sent home weekly. Tasks set in the Spring Term are linked to literacy and numeracy topics and are issued in a homework book.

In **Years 1 and 2**, children are likely to have one or two tasks per week. This could be literacy, RE, topic or numeracy (for example an exercise where children compare the weights of different household items), a short piece of writing (such as a recount of a school trip) or work relating to the class topic (find out five facts about the Great Fire of London, create a forest using junk modelling). In Year 1, phonics cards might be sent to practise at home to prepare pupils for the statutory Phonics Screening. As a guide, pupils should typically complete 15 minutes reading every day.

In **Years 3 and 4**, in addition to spellings and times tables, class teachers set two homework activities each week: typically, one English (such as a worksheet on collective nouns, or a book review) and one Mathematics (a worksheet on bar charts creation) or researching a topic or a creative project. As a guide, pupils should typically complete 20 minutes reading every day.

In **Years 5 and 6**, children may have two or three pieces of homework each week and are expected to manage their time effectively to ensure homework is completed to a high standard. The amount begins to increase to prepare children for SATs and the transition to secondary school. The activities might include mathematics worksheets/booklets, researching a topic, book reviews and grammar and comprehension exercises plus topics and creative projects. As a guide, pupils should typically complete 20 minutes reading every day.

Alongside formal homework tasks, all children bring home a reading scheme book from Reception onwards. Parents/carers are expected to share a book and/or listen to their children read then write in their child's reading record daily until they become a free reader.

Once a 'free reader' children will bring home a reading book of their choice and a library book. Parents are still encouraged to listen to their child read to check that they are reading with understanding and also to ask questions so that their child talks about books. If reading to themselves, children should write a comment in their reading records daily, with parents signing at least weekly.

Weekly spellings and number bond facts/times tables are set from Year 1 or 2. Pupils are tested on spellings and number bonds/multiplication facts on a weekly basis.

3. Time allocation

At St Mark's we appreciate that all children are individuals and some children will take longer to complete tasks than others and some children have to balance out of school activities with home-learning tasks – parents should use their judgement and comment on children's written responses if they were unable to complete the whole task. Home-learning tasks are differentiated for children of varying abilities and tasks are as open ended as possible to encourage the children go in different directions with their learning, be as creative as possible in the foundation subjects and will include 'talking' about topics on occasions in preparation for learning in school.

4. Feedback on home-learning

Home-learning will be acknowledged and the children will receive feedback on how well they have done and what they could improve – this feedback is not always in written form. This may be discussed in lessons. If a child has difficulties with a piece of home-learning, they should discuss it with their teacher prior to the handing in date. Pupils will be rewarded for the quality of their home-learning (not just submitting it) with Class Dojo or Headteacher awards for exceptional effort or quality. Pupil's response to home-learning may be commented on in the termly reports.

5. The role of the parent

We cannot emphasise enough the importance of parents supporting and encouraging their child by giving time and a suitable environment at home in which home-learning can be done. Above all other subjects, reading is a crucial aspect of school and needs to be encouraged at all times; it is most important for a parent to try to hear their child read as often as possible, to discuss the plot and characterisation and ask the child questions about what has been read.

In Early Years in addition to reading, home-learning in Early years will consist of letter formation sheets linked to the phonics being taught and spellings when appropriate.

Home-learning in upper Key Stage 2 will also consist of SATs practise tasks.

Home-learning allows parents to see what their children are doing and to support their learning. This partnership between school and home is a vital part of successful education. At St Mark's, we take the view that children are likely to get more out of an activity if parents get involved however we equally expect children in Key Stage 2 to be taking greater responsibility for completing the home-learning tasks and developing some independence in doing so in preparation for high school. Children benefit enormously from being able to discuss what they have done with their parents.

It is expected that parents will support the school in encouraging their children to develop a responsible attitude to their home-learning.

5. Pupils that do not complete home-learning

The expectation is that ALL children will complete their tasks by Tuesday every week. Teachers will keep records of children completing home-learning which can be reported at the termly parental consultation meetings. If there are problems with children not completing home-learning the class teacher will speak with parents to find out if there is a valid reason. Children will complete their unfinished tasks with a teacher by the end of the week.

6. Monitoring and evaluation

The efficiency and effectiveness of the Home-learning policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Senior Leadership Team. The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.