

St Oliver Plunkett Primary School



HOMework POLICY

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Definition

What is homework?

Homework is anything that 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 to support children's learning. For example, a parent who spends time reading a story to their child before bedtime is helping with homework.

Homework should not be a chore, but children should see it as an extension of their schoolwork. There may be occasions when some tasks are more challenging or difficult than usual as homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment.

In St Oliver Plunkett Primary School, we see homework as encompassing a wide range of possibilities. The following list simply outlines just a few suggestions:

- reading with a parent
- finishing off work from the class
- undertaking individual research for a project
- learning number facts (tables)
- literacy or numeracy activities both written and verbal

Rationale

Homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. A good, well-managed homework programme helps children and young people to develop the skills and attitudes they will need for successful lifelong learning.

In primary school the purpose of homework changes as children get older. For younger children developing a partnership with parents or carers, and involving them actively in children's learning, is the key purpose. As children get older, homework provides an opportunity for children to develop the skills of independent learning.

In St Oliver Plunkett Primary School, we also acknowledge the essential 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 wide range of clubs and extra curricular activities. We are well aware that children spend more time at home than at school, and we believe they develop their skills, interests and talents to the full only when parents encourage them to make maximum use of the experiences and opportunities that are available outside of school.

Aims and Objectives of Homework

The aims of an effective homework policy are -

- to ensure a whole school consistent approach to homework and to make homework manageable for all concerned
- to consolidate and reinforce learning done in school and assist in preparation for future class work, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy
- to enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development
- to help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner
- to encourage skills and attitudes which help children improve their educational performance
- to provide a context for pupil/parent interaction
- to promote a partnership between home and school in supporting every child's learning by enabling parents to have a direct insight into their child's school work
- to help children develop good work habits and self-discipline for the future.

Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers

At the start of each school year, every parent will receive details through a meeting with teacher and a note explaining what homework their child receive Parents are also given guidelines for homework including the types of homework which might be set by school as well as indicating activities that parents might wish to develop with their children.

When teachers set homework they will ensure that:

- It is always clearly related to current areas of study within the classroom.
- The task is made clear to children and matched to their abilities, especially for those pupils with special educational needs.
- It is supported by a written note/homework diary in which children and parents can note success and record any problems encountered.
- Time scales for completion and submission are explicit.
- Work is marked as promptly as possible.
- Problems or difficulties encountered by children are dealt with swiftly.
- Regular completion of homework of a high standard is recognised and celebrated.
- The impact of homework upon the standards of children's attainment is monitored.
- All children will be expected to complete tasks. They will be given an opportunity to succeed in this through using a homework session in school leisure time if they continually fail to complete it. Parents will always be informed of these procedures.

Parents

It is essential that parents display a positive attitude to homework. It is also important for parents to recognise that it is the children's responsibility to complete the work. Parents need to listen to the child's explanation of what they have to do, discuss the work their child is doing and whether or not help is needed.

If parents have any problems or questions about homework, they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher.

Consequently, parents need to discuss with their children the following questions:

- *When is it a good time to do any homework?*
- *Where is the best place for homework to be done?*
- *What helps concentration?*
- *How long should my homework take me?*
- *Who should I ask for help and how much help should I expect?*

Parents are therefore responsible for –

- Providing suitable, quiet surroundings where pupils can do their homework alone, i.e. not in front of the television.
- Encouraging younger family members to play quieter games if in the same room.
- Making it clear to children that they value homework, and support the school in explaining how it can help their learning;
- Encouraging children to persevere with a task and giving support if appropriate.
- Giving due importance to non-written tasks such as listening and talking about children's reading on a regular basis.
- Assisting with the learning of weekly spelling and tables.
- Keeping school informed of any changes in the child's circumstances which *may* affect learning.

Homework should not be a stressful experience between parent and child. This leads to poor learning and defeats the whole purpose. Contact with the class teacher should be made if this is happening.

Children

Children are responsible for:

- Undertaking homework promptly and with a positive attitude
- Reading at home and returning books on time
- Making full use of all the opportunities they are presented with
- Being organised and remembering to take homework home and return it on time
- Taking responsibility for their own learning and completing work within an agreed time
- Remembering that learning tables and spelling is of vital importance and that 'learning homeworks' are still expected to be completed
- Taking pride in presentation and content, acknowledging the high personal standard expected

Pupils with Special Educational Needs

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. If a child has special needs, we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way.

Procedures and Expectations

Homework will, obviously, vary in content and expectation as children become older.

The following table clearly displays how long homework should take, on average, and how this progresses throughout the school.

Year Group	Time spent on average (Per night)
P1	15 minutes
P2	20 minutes
P3	30 minutes
P4	35 minutes
P5	45 minutes
P6	55 minutes (rising to 60 minutes in term 3)
P7	60 minutes