



Homework Policy

INTRODUCTION

We believe that homework is a vitally important extension of schoolwork. It is a powerful contributor to:

- Reinforcing and extending knowledge and understanding;
- Achieving individual excellence;
- Building confidence and self-esteem;
- Promoting independent study skills;
- Promoting a self-disciplined and self-motivated attitude to study;
- Encouraging pupils to become autonomous learners;
- Meeting parental expectations.

Motivation, confidence and self-esteem will all be enhanced when pupils achieve regularly. The effectiveness of homework is gauged by its contribution to advancing pupils as autonomous learners and in the success they achieve. Learning is reinforced by practice. Only ideas that have been structured, practised, reflected upon and organised will pass into the long-term memory.

Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Setting appropriate homework tasks **which reinforce and consolidate class learning**;
- Establishing homework procedures with their pupils;
- Ensuring pupils have a home reading record and keeping a class record of this;
- Ensuring that pupils have a clear understanding of the tasks involved and a common understanding of the high expectations held of them;
- Rewarding quality work with appropriate recognition;
- Contacting parents when homework tasks are not completed or are not of the required standard.

Parents

We encourage parents to take an active role in pupil homework and to communicate with the school regarding the work done by their child. In particular parents are responsible for:

- Encouraging pupils to spend the recommended time on homework;
- Encouraging high standards of effort and presentation;
- Encouraging good study habits at home;
- Checking homework regularly;
- Expecting homework to be set regularly;
- Contacting the school with any concerns.

Pupils

Pupils are responsible for:

- Making sure that they understand set tasks before they leave school each evening;
- Tackling homework promptly and with a positive attitude;
- 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;
- Taking pride in presentation and content, acknowledging the high personal standard expected;

- Seeking help at home or in school when a task is too difficult.

HOMEWORK TASKS

Homework is given on four evenings each week and is based on the current work in the class.

In Primary 1 and Primary 2 the homework is literacy related.

From Primary 3 onwards pupils are required to do a wider range of homework activities:

- Spelling work is done to prepare for weekly spelling test on Friday;
- Reading related homework is expected each evening including a range of activities such as reading set pages, preparing comprehension activities, writing a response to what has been read or reading Star reading books;

It is expected that written homework should take no longer than twenty minutes each evening in Primary 3, extending to thirty minutes by Primary 7. Homework should not be a stressful experience between parent and child. This leads to poor learning and defeats the whole purpose. Parents are encouraged to contact the school if this is happening.

SPECILAIST HOMEWORK

At certain times of the year, class teachers will not send written homework but will send seasonal specific activities such as outdoor learning activities in the summer or learning of spoken lines for school productions at Christmas. Parents will be advised of this in advance.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITY

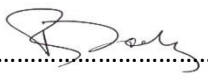
It is the responsibility of the Principal to:

- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy as part of the review;
- Take into account feedback on parental surveys;
- Ensure that each member of staff receives the necessary training and support to enable them to carry out their responsibilities at induction and as part of ongoing INSET.

This Homework Policy has been prepared in consultation with the full school staff.

Adopted by the Board of Governors of St. Mary's Primary School at a meeting held in

June 2026

Signed  (Chairperson)

To be reviewed in June 2029

Signed (Chairperson)

10 Things You Can Do To Help Your Child Learn

1. Give your child confidence through lots of praise and encouragement.
 - *You have tremendous power to strengthen your child's confidence - and confidence is vital to learning.*
 - *Provide specific praise that focuses on a particular aspect of their work. Comments such as "I like the way you have..." are more effective than "you're clever".*
2. Read to, and with, your child as much as possible.
 - *Parents and carers are encouraged to read to children, hear them read, or encourage them to read to themselves, for at least 20 minutes a day.*
3. Encourage your child to observe and talk about what they see, feel, think etc.
4. Make use of your local library.
5. Visit places you think your child might find interesting or places related to the work being done in school e.g. museums, parks, National Trust properties, Belfast Zoo, open farms .
6. If your child likes watching television, watch it together sometimes and talk about what has been watched. Children enjoy sharing their experiences and will gain a lot from the discussion.
7. Try to provide a reasonably quiet and suitable place where your child can work and show that you and all members of the family value and respect the homework activity.
8. Try to set time aside to support your child's homework activities whilst also allowing some independence where appropriate.
9. Encourage your child to discuss homework with you, including feedback from teachers.
10. Help your child to see the importance of homework and teach them to become more independent and take more responsibility for themselves as they get older.