**St. Matthew’s PS**



**Homework**

**Policy & Procedure Paper**

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**Homework Policy**

**RATIONALE & INTRODUCTION**

This policy was first written in January 2005 and has been reviewed in January 2012.

A review including discussion at Pupil and Parent Council and discussion among staff was held in 2012. The policy now reflects current practice including shared learning.

Within St. Matthew’s PS, the purpose of homework is to:

* Encourage pupils to participate with responsibility in their own learning.
* Develop the habit of independent study.
* Provide opportunities to consolidate work done in class.
* Widen the learning experience by allowing pupils to use materials and sources of information not available in the classroom.
* Strengthen the liaison between home and school and involve parents in pupils’ work.

Homework tasks should:

* Be varied.
* Be related to the ability and individual needs of the child.
* Provide opportunities for parental involvement.
* Be clearly explained to the pupil by the teacher, e.g. pupils and parents should know exactly what is expected and when homework is to be returned to the teacher for marking. Diaries can be used as a means of communication between home and school. Parents should sign diaries and completed homework every day.
* Be checked/marked/utilized by the teacher.
* Be completed within the maximum following time bands per night, Monday-Thursday:
* P1 – 15 minutes
* P2 - 20 minutes
* P3 – 20 minutes
* P4 – 30 minutes
* P5 - 30 minutes
* P6 – 40 minutes
* P7 – 40 minutes

Over and above this private reading every night should be supported by the parent in a quiet, relaxed atmosphere. If there is one important thing that you can do to help your child become a success in school and in life -  it is to encourage him to be a reader and love reading.  The most successful people in the world are voracious readers.  This is no surprise, as reading opens the door to virtually all knowledge.  Moreover, it is the path to lifelong learning.  Helping your child to love reading is one of the most important things you can do as a parent – and it will be worth your time and energy.

The Senior Management Team will monitor the homework through the school monitoring programme to ensure that homework issued and is completed is in line with school policy.

**WEEKLY TASKS**

Parents should expect at least 3 areas of the curriculum to be set for homework each week as well as a prayer to be learnt over a few weeks. Homework may differ from week to week depending on work being covered in class and the needs of the children.

Children will not be given work home until they have been taught the concept or skill in class. Necessary resources to complete a set task eg an art task; will be provided by the school.

It is also appropriate to ask children to be reflective and self-evaluate their progress and we encourage all children to record an achievement.

**INFORMATION ON SPECIFIC TASKS**

French: issued regularly to P5, P6 and P7 pupils.

Spelling: P2 children focus on learning to spell 100 common words; P3-7 children work on theirSpelling programme, grouped by ability. Some children may have regular spelling homework to help them master the week’s spelling words. More able spellers may not require a spelling programme and would be given tricky/interesting vocabulary to support their learning.

The LOOK-SAY-COVER-WRITE-CHECK approach is the spelling strategy encouraged in school.

Research Project/ Personal Topics: Children may be asked to carry out a project involving some research from Primary 5 to Primary 7. The teacher will provide a clear outline of what is expected and the project will be set over a number of weeks if necessary to allow visits to libraries, collection of resources etc. Occasionally for some children this may not be an appropriate activity, despite differentiated support. In such situations, class teacher will contact parents.

**HOW THE SCHOOL WILL HELP ORGANISE HOMEWORK**

Each child will have a homework diary and jotter. This gives teachers and parents the opportunity to comment on children’ progress, and offers a two-way communication between home and school.

**WILL HOMEWORK BE THE SAME FOR EVERY CHILD IN THE CLASS?**

All children work in ability groups in class and homework tasks will often be differentiated to reflect the work of their particular group. Differentiation of tasks may be

by outcome - an open ended task, tackled in a variety of ways;

by support – teacher may need to provide additional support to a group before taking home the task; and

by task ie different children carrying out different tasks

Differentiation of tasks ensures that children work at a level best suited to them and at the most appropriate pace.

Individuals may also have specific homework set to best suit their needs.

**WHAT IS EXPECTED OF TEACHERS, CHILDREN AND PARENTS?**

Teachers should:

Set varied homework to reflect the needs of the class

Explain tasks clearly

Organise for the marking of homework eg teacher, peer-group, self marking strategies, recognising and

rewarding homework

Monitor the progress of the children

Children should:

Complete homework tasks as specified on time

Ensure the same level of effort and presentation as would be expected of class work

Parents should:

Be active in supporting their child’s learning eg pacing of homework over the week

Ensure there are suitable working conditions at home eg not in front of the television

Inform the teacher if there are any reasons why work cannot be completed on time

Check the tasks and sign the homework diary

If homework causes your child to become stressed, please leave the task until another time and contact the teacher if it persists.

**HOW MUCH HELP SHOULD PARENTS GIVE CHILDREN?**

In general, parents should support their child in allowing them to complete their homework tasks so that work produced is the child’s own. Primary 1 to 3 parents should supervise homework tasks, Primary 4-7 children should be encouraged to be independent and given time limits to complete this.

Many parents are often unsure about whether or not to correct homework, especially sums and spelling. Parents should look over completed work and encourage children to check the quality of presentation and to look for any mistakes.

Hopefully the child will find and correct any errors, though if parents feel that a child has seriously misunderstood a task, then it would be best to contact the teacher.

**HANDING IN HOMEWORK**

For children participating in home learning activities, we expect completed homework to be handed in on time. This gives children valuable experience of working to a deadline/sharing resources and facilitates staff with their planning and marking schedules.

Pupils should be aware that if homework is not handed in on the due day, appropriate action will be taken:

The class teacher will speak to the child to ascertain the reason and ask for the homework to be handed in on the next day.

2. If the homework is not returned on the next day, teachers will send out the standard “ homework letter” to inform parents of the situation.

3. If the desired effect is not achieved, the teacher will alert the appropriate Depute Head Teacher, who will request from the child, the completion and return of the homework.

4. If still unsuccessful, the appropriate Depute Head Teacher will contact the parent.

**UNFINISHED CLASS WORK**

Children do occasionally fail to complete tasks in class for a variety of reasons. In such situations, it may be that unfinished work is required to be sent home for completion. The class teacher will also send home an “unfinished class work letter”. Such work would be in addition to normal homework.

Should work be unfinished on a regular basis and is becoming a persistent problem, the class teacher will consult with a member of the SMT. If appropriate, parents will be contacted.