



Homework Agreed Practice

Rationale

St John the Apostle School builds an educational community within the Catholic tradition, which will develop the skills, knowledge, values and attitudes that enable children to face the challenges of life with confidence. Homework:

- Allows for practicing, extending and consolidating work done in class.
- Provides training for students in planning and organising time.
- Develops a range of skills in identifying and using information resources.
- Establishes habits of study, concentration and self-discipline that will serve students for the rest of their lives.
- Strengthens home-school partnerships.
- Reaffirms the role of parents and caregivers as partners in education.
- Provides parents and caregivers with insights into what is being taught in the classroom.
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Goals

Homework is most beneficial when it:

- Reinforces and extends class work and consolidates basic skills and knowledge.
- Is challenging and purposeful, but not so demanding that it has adverse effects on the student's motivation and school engagement.
- Allows students to take responsibility for their own learning. Is well coordinated and teacher expectations are well communicated to both the students and their parents
- Is set on a regular basis and establishes a routine of home study.
- Allows teachers to set suitable amounts of homework which are varied and at an appropriate level considering the age, stage of schooling and capabilities of students.
- Takes into account students' home responsibilities and extracurricular activities such as clubs and sport.
- Is marked promptly and accurately.
- Allows feedback and follow-up to be provided regularly to students.
- Develops and extends the core learning skills of inquiry and independent study.

Types of Homework

The amount of time that students are expected to spend on homework will depend upon the age, ability, home environment and extracurricular activities of students, including family and cultural obligations. It is important that students of all ages have opportunities for free time, leisure and physical activities outside of school.

The three main types of homework are:

Practice exercises - providing students with the opportunities to apply new knowledge, or review, revise and reinforce newly acquired skills, for example:

- Consolidation exercises e.g. Maths, including memorisation of tables.
- Practising for mastery e.g. Spelling words.
- Revising information about a current topic.
- Reading for pleasure.

Preparatory homework - providing opportunities for students to gain background information on a unit of study so that they are better prepared for future lessons, for example:

- Background reading.
- Reading e.g. English text for class discussion.
- Researching topics for a class unit of work.
- Collecting items e.g. Geometric shapes.

Extension assignments - encouraging students to pursue knowledge individually and imaginatively, for example:

- Writing e.g. book reviews.
- Making or designing something e.g. art work.
- Investigations e.g. Science, SOSE (Studies of Society and its Environment).
- Researching e.g. History, local news.
- Information and retrieval skills eg. Using a home computer to find material on the Internet.
- Monitoring e.g. Advertising in particular newspapers.
- Wherever possible homework should recognise the place of technology in today's world and the benefits of using technology such as home computers.

Agreed Practice

The role of the parent/caregiver:

- Taking an active interest in homework.
- Ensuring that there is time set aside for homework.
- Encouraging and supporting students to complete homework.
- Providing, where possible, a dedicated place and desk for homework and study.
- Encouraging their children to read and take an interest in current events.
- Assisting teachers to monitor homework by signing completed work if requested and being aware of the amount of homework set.
- Communicating with teachers any concerns about the nature of homework and their children's approach to the homework.

The role of the Teacher:

- Explaining to students and their parents or caregivers the purpose and benefits of homework.
- Ensuring students and parents or caregivers are aware of the school's homework policy.
- Providing quality homework activities related to class work.
- Setting a suitable amount of relevant homework that is appropriate to the ability of each student.
- Ensuring that students are aware of what is expected of them.
- Giving students sufficient time to complete their homework, taking into account, as far as possible, competing home obligations and extracurricular activities.
- Marking homework promptly and appropriately, maintaining homework records and providing feedback to students and parents or caregivers.
- Alerting parents or caregivers of any developing problems concerning their children's homework and suggesting strategies that they can use to assist their children with their homework.

The role of the Students

- Being aware of the importance of homework.
- Being aware of the school's Homework Policy.
- Completing homework within the given time frame.
- Alerting parents or caregivers to homework expectations.
- Seeking assistance from teachers and parents or caregivers when difficulties arise.
- Showing their homework to their parents or caregivers.
- Ensuring homework is of a high standard.
- Organising their time to ensure that sufficient time is given to quality homework within set deadlines.

Homework Times

At St John the Apostle School we have established time frames for Homework for each year level. If a child has worked consistently on their homework for this period and has not completed the written tasks parents should sign off on the work completed and communicate the fact to their teacher.

Should a child in older grades have commitments on one night and be unable to do any homework that night they are expected to catch that amount of work up during the remainder of the week.

Children are encouraged to read to their parents every night when they are developing reading skills. As the students become more proficient and confident they are encouraged to extend the amount of time they read and the difficulty of the texts. The homework and reading time below is a minimum.

Kinder & Year One: Up to 15 minutes including reading per night.

Year Two: Up to 30 Minutes including reading per night. Fifteen minutes of school readers and another fifteen minutes of a book of the student's choice.

Year 3 & Year 4: 30 minutes of reading. Fifteen minutes of written work and 30 minutes of reading per night.

Year 5 & Year 6: Up to 45 minutes written homework and 15 minutes reading per night.

Family Week

During Week 7 of each term students are given a week off written homework. Students should still read every night. During this week, families are encouraged to do activities together. Many of these activities can be educational/developmental in nature as well as being fun. Eg. Scrabble, puzzles, chess, various card games, darts, etc.

Homework can take various forms. The use of the Homework Grid recognises that "any work that children do at home needs to be counted (as homework) and parents and teachers should work together to ensure that children do some work at home, but not a lot of sedentary work". Activities including housework, sport's training, family outings as well as set tasks should be considered as homework. A balance of activities will help to ensure that children participate in family life and responsibilities, stay healthy, as well as meeting/maintaining school expectations.

Related Policies / Agreed Practices

Review

The St John the Apostle Homework Agreed Practice is reviewed at least once each five years in line with current Registration practices. It may also be reviewed more often according to the need and educational trends.

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