

Mission Statement

"We share in Christ's life so He can guide our thoughts, words and actions."

Rights of the Child

The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is at the heart of our school's Planning, Policies, Practice and Ethos. As a Rights Respecting School we not only teach about children's rights but also model rights and respect in all relationships. This policy is underpinned by:

Article 3: Everyone who works with children should always do what is best for each child

Article 29: The right to become the best that you can be.

Article 31: Every child has the right to play and rest.

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 has been extensively researched by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and it has produced some interesting facts. Homework at primary school level has little or no impact on children's individual progress and outcomes. However, there is some evidence that when homework is used as a short and focused intervention it can be effective in improving students' attainment. When exploring the cost and impact of homework, it states that it is high cost (time spent on preparing homework, marking homework, distributing homework etc.) and has low impact (little or no impact on children's progress). The homework set at Holy Cross Catholic Primary School is underpinned by this research.

The aims and objectives of homework at Holy Cross Catholic Primary School are:

- To help pupils develop skills of an independent learner
- To promote a partnership between home and school in supporting each child's learning
- To consolidate and reinforce learning done in school and to allow children to practise skills taught in lessons
- To help children develop good work habits in preparation for Secondary School.

There are different homework expectations for each year group. They are as follows:

Early Years

The main focus for homework is reading. Enjoying books and reading stories from a very early age is crucial in the development of children. It helps their ability to understand words, use their imagination and develop their speech as well as being something they really enjoy.

- All children are expected to read at least 5 minutes every day.
- All children will have a reading record book to aid communication about reading between home and school.

- All children will bring home 'red words' to learn.
- Additional homework may be set that is linked to the current learning in the classroom to aid discussions in class and at home.

Year One

- All children have a homework book and weekly open-ended tasks are set based on any learning from the previous week.
- Additional homework may be sent home to prepare the children for the Year One Phonics Screening Check in the summer term.
- Individual homework may be set for a child that would be short and focused to aid their progress in a given skill. The parent would be informed if this was to happen.

Year Two

- All children have a homework book and weekly open-ended tasks are set based on any learning from the previous week.
- Additional homework may be sent home to prepare the children for the Key Stage One SATs.
- Individual homework may be set for a child that would be short and focused to aid their progress in a given skill. The parent would be informed if this was to happen.

Year Three

- All children have a homework book and weekly open-ended tasks are set based on any learning from the previous week and/or sacramental preparation.
- Individual homework may be set for a child that would be short and focused to aid their progress in a given skill. The parent would be informed if this was to happen.

Year Four

- All children have a homework book and weekly open-ended tasks are set based on any learning from the previous week.
- Individual homework may be set for a child that would be short and focused to aid their progress in a given skill. The parent would be informed if this was to happen.

Year Five

- All children have a homework book and weekly open-ended tasks are set based on any learning from the previous week.
- Additional homework will be sent home in the summer term to support transition to Year Six.
- Individual homework may be set for a child that would be short and focused to aid their progress in a given skill. The parent would be informed if this was to happen.

Year Six

- The focus of homework in Year Six is to prepare the children for the Key Stage Two SATs. This includes weekly arithmetic questions and reading comprehension activities. In addition to this, in the Spring Term extra preparation may be sent home.
- A project is also set to help prepare the children for Confirmation.

- Individual homework may be set for a child that would be short and focused to aid their progress in a given skill. The parent would be informed if this was to happen.

Reading

All children from Year One to Year Six have a guided reading book and record. Every child is expected to read at least 10 minutes a day and every child is set a weekly guided reading task based on their guided reading book. In addition to this, children visit the school library and can take library books home to encourage reading for pleasure. Any unreturned guided reading books or library books will cost £5.00.

Times Tables

All children should know their times tables up to 12 with fluency by the end of Year Three. Please practise these regularly at home to support the teaching of them at school.

Homework will not be set during the school holidays, with the exception of Year 6. Obviously during the holiday periods, the school asks parents to strongly encourage children to continue improving their reading skills by reading books for pleasure.

Additional homework tips

If you would like to support your child further at home, then please use the following tips

- Look on the school website to see what topic your child is learning about- go to the library to choose books that your child could read at home to develop their understanding.
- Look on the school website to see what your child is learning about in Mathematics and use the Mastery Booklets which have activities in there which support what your child will be learning in school.
- Go to any bookstore and purchase revision aids/books.
- Use websites to support your child's learning, for example, Oxford Owl, Phonics Play, BBC Bitesize.
- Handwriting- Encourage the teaching of cursive script at home.
- Spellings- Use the common exception word list for your child's year group to practise their spellings.
- Encourage your child to keep a diary or a journal to record in and improve their writing skills.
- Play games to support mathematical concepts such as Cards, Sudoku, Dominoes.
- Go to the Nrich website which provides lots of open-ended and fun Maths investigations.
- Learn to tell the time.
- Use twitter to see what your child has been learning about and ask your child to write a recount about what they learnt or a poster.

Parent Guidance on how to complete Homework

It is natural to want to help your child to reflect their true ability, but if their standard of homework is far superior to the standard of work your child is producing at school, this can sometimes have a negative impact on your child, making them feel less capable and often, unable to fulfil your own drive for perfection.

Here are some points to consider when it comes to helping your child with their homework:

- You can encourage good habits, being neat and tidy, taking their time to write clearly and in cursive script.
- You can help promote a routine for when homework time is e.g. displaying it on the wall calendar so your child knows when it will be.
- You are encouraged to talk through what the homework is about using questions like 'Is this what you were learning about in class this week?' 'What activity did you do in class about...?' 'Tell me what you know about...'
- Set up a reward chart or system for your child. Once homework has been done, they can play a game, choose an activity or get a sticker.
- Do not take on the responsibility for your child's homework, it is theirs not yours. They will need to live the consequences of not completing their homework on time or receiving the praise in school for completing it.
- Keep positive in the way you discuss homework and the chances are that if you don't make it sound like a chore that needs to be argued over, it won't be viewed as such by your child.
- If you can see your child is struggling, suggest that he or she takes a break and return to it later. Avoid using negative language as this will start to create a negative association with homework.
- If there are good reasons for your child not completing their homework, please let the teacher know by making a note in the homework book.

The Government guidelines suggest timings for homework:

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| Early Years | 10-15mins 4x a week | <i>These timings are a suggestion. All children must read every day.</i> |
| Year One and Year Two | 1 hour per week | |
| Year Three and Year Four | 1.5 hours per week | |
| Year Five | 2 hours per week | |
| Year Six | 30 minutes per weekday | |

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, we cannot emphasise enough that children should have leisure time, and time to take part in out of school activities, clubs, meet with friends, enjoy family time etc. Homework should not take over and fill all their spare time during this important time in their development. Any additional activities you can do with your child, such as cooking, reading, visiting the library, visiting interesting places and playing games, will all contribute to their learning.