

Reviewed 2009
Reviewed 2013
To be reviewed 2016

ST VINCENT'S SCHOOL HOMEWORK POLICY

Aims

The school's aims include: *ensure all children achieve their potential, encourage children to show responsibility and work in partnership with parents*. We believe that homework will support these aims by:

- Developing an effective partnership between school and parents, enabling parents to become more involved in their child's schoolwork.
- Fostering a supportive learning relationship between parent and child.
- Encouraging children to develop the confidence and self-discipline needed to study on their own.
- Extending school learning through consolidating and reinforcing skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Enabling children to practise and consolidate skills, knowledge and understanding; to broaden the context of learning and provide enrichment and extension.
- Enabling children to take responsibility for their own learning, to become independent learners and to develop perseverance.

Teachers' Responsibilities

Teachers should ensure that homework is well planned, prepared and explained, and is appropriate to the ability level of the children. Where appropriate, homework should be marked as soon as possible. Teachers should take responsibility for the collection of homework, providing regular feedback and praise for completed work and should inform parents if children regularly fail to do their homework. Class teachers will determine a programme of homework specific to their class and will inform parents and children of their expectations.

Parents' Responsibilities

Parents can help in the following ways:

- Showing interest in the work done.
- Giving encouragement, help and praise.
- Checking that the presentation of work is of a good standard.
- Being willing to sign homework diaries and reading records, and make comments where appropriate.
- Reading with their child.

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Children's Responsibilities

Children should remember to take homework home as soon as it is set and bring it back to school by the required day. Written homework should be completed as neatly and carefully as schoolwork.

How you can help:

- Provide a quiet area where your child can work. It is helpful to switch off the TV to aid concentration.
- Offer your help and support for younger children to complete tasks.
- Expect older children to work independently, but make it clear that you are there if needed.
- Encourage your child to complete homework on the day set, as the task will have just been explained. If they leave it until the day before it is due in, they may find that they need resources that they do not have to hand. The setting of homework several days in advance enables children to develop skills in organising their time. Younger children will need your support in moving towards this.
- Check your child's School Diary (Yrs 3-6) and Homework folder regularly.
- Take an interest in the homework and encourage your child to take a pride in the presentation of written tasks. Work should be handwritten by your child in pencil or a suitable handwriting pen, unless directed otherwise by your child's class teacher.

What do I do if I have a query?

If your child has a problem completing the homework or you have any questions, please call in and see the class teacher or write a note in the School Diary (Yrs 3-6) or My Reading Record (Yrs 1-2) . We will do all that we can to resolve the problem. Your support in the process is vital for children's success in developing self-study skills as they move on up through the school.

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Leisure Time Reading

Many studies highlight the importance of cultivating the habit of independent reading. Leisure time reading is essentially an out of school activity yet it does not easily fit into our homework model. How can we foster and develop this habit in our children?

- Encourage children to choose books independently.
- Talk to children about their choice of books and be aware of what they are reading in their spare time.
- Encourage children to spend time reading on a regular basis. This should include weekends and holidays.
- Library books should be brought back each week on the appropriate day. Every child should have a book for silent reading in class and one to read at home. Some children are well able to cope with reading two books concurrently. For others this is too confusing and so they need help organising themselves for their reading activities.
- Continue reading aloud with your child as long as he or she considers it an enjoyable activity.
- Let your children see you reading.
- Join a public library.

Reading introduces us to diverse worlds and thoughts and gives children the opportunity to confront powerful emotional experiences in a safe environment. Reading allows us to share in the experiences of others and to learn from them. The cultivation of a regular reading habit privileges a child with a life enriching habit that will prove both pleasurable and valuable.

Homework, along with schoolwork, teacher observation, projects, portfolios, diagnostic and standardised tests all lay the foundation for providing an overall picture of a pupil's progress and development as they move through the school.