

HOMEWORK POLICY

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL PINJARRA

Written: 2005
Reviewed: 2008
Reviewed: 2010
Next Review: 2017

Rationale:

While there is currently some debate within education circles as to the value and worth of giving homework to students, the staff at St Joseph's believe it remains an important aspect of primary school education.

Firstly, we believe that repetition and rote learning of certain basic knowledge, such as sight vocabulary words, reading, times tables and basic number facts, is essential for providing the student with a good foundation for further learning and progress. The pressure on schools today to cover so many learning areas and outcomes means that homework is the only way to achieve the level of repetition necessary for these basic facts and knowledge to be mastered. There is simply insufficient time in the school day to allow such mastery of these basic facts and knowledge.

Homework allows children who need further consolidation at home to complete some unfinished work from class and thus maintain their positive self-esteem by completing certain tasks. It also allows children who have been inattentive or who lack focus in class to complete class activities.

Thirdly, we believe that homework is very important in developing good study habits that will benefit the child in Secondary School. While the current debate is mainly focused on the value of homework in primary schools, there does not appear to be much evidence to support the assertion that students will perform well, graduate and / or qualify for tertiary study without dedicating two to three hours to study a night in years eleven and twelve. It seems an unreasonable proposition that children can go through primary school with no homework and then suddenly be expected to complete an hour per night in year eight. We believe that we have an obligation to assist our children to develop good study and time management skills so that they can cope with the level of homework and study expected of them for successful achievement in Secondary School.

Principles:

1. Homework will be primarily confined to mastery of basic spelling, reading and numeracy skills in years 1 – 4. Years 5 & 6 will allow for some research and ongoing project work in order to develop more complex research, time and task management skills.
2. Average homework times will generally fall within the following timeframes, bearing in mind the individual learning style and rates of children;
 - a. Juniors (yrs 1-2) 15 - 25 mins
 - b. Intermediate (yrs 3-4) 25 - 35 mins
 - c. Seniors (yrs 5-6) 35 – 45 mins

3. Unfinished school work can be set as homework in addition to regular spelling, reading and numeracy tasks, provided that it does not add significantly (more than 25%) to the overall time required of the child.
4. Homework provides an invaluable opportunity for parents to be involved in their children's learning through listening to their reading and testing them on their spelling and tables nightly.
5. Homework will only be set for the nights Monday through Thursday. Homework will not be set over the weekend, with the exception of Years 5 & 6, where students may personally choose to work on research assignments over the weekend.
6. The exact nature of the homework set in each individual class shall be communicated to parents, in general terms, at the Parent / Teacher Evening and related written material, and specifically through some form of homework diary to operate in each class.
7. Tasks set for homework will relate directly to learning in the classroom or relate to basic mastery of knowledge and skills expected at that level appropriate to the child.
8. Two-way communication between teacher and parents with regards to homework issues, problems etc is of paramount importance. In the best interests of the child each party should inform the other of any problems or discrepancies with regards to homework.
9. The school will encourage appropriate class and school awards and recognition of those who strive to complete their homework and at a high standard.

Procedures:

1. The class teacher/s shall develop a Homework Plan which shall be communicated to parents at the Parent /Teacher Evening and distributed in written form at the meeting and sent home for those who don't attend. The Homework Plan will outline the nature and estimated duration of homework activities for children in that year level. It will make clear to parents acceptable ways in which they may assist their children with the completion of homework.
2. The class teacher/s will explain and ensure that all students understand clearly the expectations of them in terms of homework.
3. The teacher/s shall ensure that students record homework or changes to set homework routines in their diary/iPad.
4. The teacher/s shall communicate any concerns regarding homework to the parents in a timely manner.
5. It is reasonable to expect that parents shall communicate to the teacher, in a timely manner, any concerns or queries that they have regarding homework.
6. The teachers are to encourage the use of the homework or communication diary as a useful tool in two-way communication regarding homework.
7. Spelling, reading, basic maths concepts (tables, simple addition, etc.) and diaries need to be checked on a daily basis. Only reading and diaries need to be signed by parents on a daily basis.
8. Each teacher's Homework Plan shall be consistent with the principles and procedures outlined in this policy.
9. This policy needs to be incorporated into teachers' class Homework Plan that is presented to parents at the Parent Information Evening at the beginning of the school year.