

HOMework POLICY

Developed 2014
Reviewed 2017
Next Review 2021

Rationale

As part of educating the whole child, St Bernard's Catholic Primary School sees homework as valuable in reinforcing the skills taught at school. Homework is seen as an opportunity for the children to take responsibility for their learning. Teachers will set homework that they believe is fair in the context of the classroom so that reinforcement, consolidation and extension of class work may be achieved.

Children need time to relax after a day at school and therefore time out to play and becoming involved in extracurricular activities is seen as important in the development of a balanced, healthy, active lifestyle.

It is relevant to note that many children have long bus trips to take them to and from school which in some cases involves up to an hour travelling time. This limits the amount of time after school to relax in their home environment. Additionally, extracurricular activities involve late finishes thus reducing available time in which to complete homework.

The school community recognises the commitment students and their parents make to these valuable after school activities and so every consideration will be taken into account so as not to impinge on family time and importantly not to cause stress and concern to the child or their parents with excessive amounts of homework.

Whilst homework will primarily be set by the class teacher, there may be occasions when assignments or projects may be set by specialist teachers. This is seen by the school community as an important and integral part of student learning. At such times teachers will consult with each other to avoid any undue work load for the students.

Principles

The giving of regular homework aims to consolidate learning and develop independent learning skills. Homework encourages the child to accept responsibility for their learning and to adopt a routine which supports good study skills. It also aims to foster communication between home and school and enable parents to participate in their child's learning. With the continued support of parents and teachers, we expect students will adhere to these guidelines and complete set homework on a regular basis.

Procedures

- Children in Kindy to Year 2 will each have a Communication book.
- Children from Years 3 – 6 will each have a School Diary.
- Parents and teachers are asked to sign/stamp Communication book weekly. If set homework is not completed a note in their School Diary helps to prevent needless concern.
- Work may be allocated on a weekly basis to enable children to plan around any extracurricular activities they could have during the week, leaving the weekends free for family interaction.
- Homework allocations (Mon to Thurs):
(an *average* allocation):

Kindy - Partner reading	10 mins (Semester 2)
PP – Partner reading	10 mins
Year 1 – Reading and Sight Words	20 mins
Years 2 – 3	20 – 30 minutes
Years 4 – 6	30 – 45 minutes
- Typical homework would include: times tables, reading, spelling, mental maths and unfinished work.
- In years 4-6, homework will increasingly become more research/project based, together with normal homework routines.

How you can support your child's learning at home

- Set aside a suitable area for the child to use for study.
- Be aware of the task the child has to achieve/complete and give appropriate encouragement. This builds self esteem and a positive relationship with your child.
- Share information and read over written work making suggestions for improvement. It is important that you do not do the work for the child as allowing your child to make mistakes is not only a valuable life lesson for them, but also enables the teacher to see areas of work which may need to be addressed.
- If your child cannot meet a due date for a project/homework due to family commitments or sickness, please advise the teacher as soon as possible to allow the teacher to provide an appropriate extension time.
- Continue to read to and with your child over holiday periods.

Holidays during school time

As a school we are not in a position to encourage or condone holidays during school time as outlined in the School Education Act 1999. However, the school also understands that, for a variety of reasons, parents may need, on rare occasions, to withdraw children from school during term time.

Holidays provide wonderful opportunities for the children to write a travel diary or blog. This may include brochures, photos and drawings of the places the children have visited. Where possible, involve the children in as many life learning activities as possible, such as

converting money, ordering meals and reading timetables or maps. At the discretion of the teacher, online apps or software programs may be recommended.

Absence due to Illness

Over the Autumn/Winter period, it is a well known fact that, the incidence of illness will increase and children will miss days of school. The school also understands that when children are sick the best place for their quick recuperation is to convalesce at home in a warm, caring environment and subsequently be able to return to school as quickly as possible. Obviously, there are varying types of absence. The school community believes that when children are unwell; they do not need the extra pressure of homework. Furthermore, sending work home that a child is missing whilst absent from school is not promoted because this work is not a reflection on the learning undertaken in class or the explicit teaching taking place. Therefore, rather than teachers sending work home whilst a child is sick, teachers will send any missed class work home once the child is healthy and back at school. In this manner, the child has an opportunity to clarify their work with the teacher in a meaningful environment.

Conclusion

The staff at St Bernard's welcome interaction and communication with all parents. Homework is seen as having merit in regard to consolidating and reinforcing work being undertaken in class, being of good preparation for secondary school, promoting lifelong learning and personal development. As such, it is an expectation of the teachers that set homework will be completed by students.

If there are any concerns or queries regarding any aspect of this policy, please make an appointment with your child's classroom teacher.