



HOMEWORK POLICY

Signed _____ (Principal) Date _____

Signed _____ (Chair of Governors) Date _____

October 2018

Date of next review _____

Our Mission Statement

At Holy Cross, we aim to develop a caring Catholic Community based upon the life and example of Jesus Christ, which envelops the life and lives of everyone and everything in our school.

It is through Christ's message of love and forgiveness that children, staff, teachers, parents and Governors, preserve the essential Catholic ethos of the school.

The school aims to provide a challenging curriculum that reflects our philosophy, broadly balanced and relevant, and to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of each and every child to his/her full potential.

We aim to assure all children that they are valued and they in turn are encouraged to show respect and value each other and the community in which they live.

Inclusion Statement

The Governors are committed to 'inclusion' in education: this involves minimising barriers to learning and participation.

Equal Opportunities Statement

The Governors and staff at Holy Cross believe that all people are equal regardless of race, colour, creed, gender, disability or personal circumstances. Therefore, we are opposed to any form of prejudice and discrimination which denies people this equality.

This policy has been developed through consultation with staff, Governors and parents.

INTRODUCTION

This is the school's policy for the provision of homework to pupils and has been drawn up in accordance with guidance issued by the DCSF. At Holy Cross we recognise the vital role parents play in the education of their children. We strongly believe in the value of home-school partnership, of which our homework policy is an important element.

HOMEWORK - A DEFINITION

Homework is defined as any work or activities which pupils are asked to do outside lesson time, either on their own or with parents or carers. At Holy Cross we see work done at home as a valuable part of school work which compliments work completed in class.

THE PURPOSE OF HOMEWORK

The school regards the purpose of homework as being to:

- ✓ develop an effective partnership between the school and parents and other carers in pursuing the aims of the school and the development of their child.
- ✓ consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding, particularly in English and Mathematics ;

- ✓ extend school learning, for example through additional reading;
- ✓ encourage pupils to take ownership of their learning as they get older to develop the confidence and self-discipline needed to study on their own, and to prepare them for the requirements of secondary school.

At Holy Cross, teaching staff recognise that pupils who have spent a busy structured day at school need time to relax and unwind at the end of the afternoon.

We are also mindful of the need to encourage children to pursue out-of-school activities, e.g. swimming, ballet, Beavers, Brownies, music lessons etc.

Homework should be used to effectively reinforce and/or extend what is learned in school. We hope that children will feel a sense of personal satisfaction in a task completed well and that their efforts will be recognised and praised and rewarded both at home and at school. Homework tasks should be undertaken to the best of their ability and presented in a suitable manner. We encourage parents and carers to give their active support to ensure that work done at home is completed conscientiously and in the best possible conditions.

Children attending peripatetic music lessons are also expected to practise in their own time.

CURRENT PRACTICE

At the beginning of the academic year, each year group will be informed of what is expected of them with regard to homework by their class teacher.

Through the termly Class Curriculum letter, teachers will explain the organisation of homework to parents. Within this letter the parents will be informed about the main topics and units of work being covered.

A termly R.E newsletter informing parents of the work being covered along with suggestions for follow up work and family activities will be issued. This letter can be found on the class pages of our website.

All pupils have homework books in which they complete homework unless specified by the class teacher.

Whenever possible, a homework letter and the work will be placed onto the schools website and class page, all spellings are placed on here.

All homework is to be completed in pencil, unless the class teacher states otherwise to individual children.

A computer may be used if the class teacher specifies.

THE NATURE OF HOMEWORK

The nature of homework will change as children get older.

For children in Foundation and Key Stage 1, developing a partnership with parents and carers, and involving them actively in children's learning is a key objective.

Short activities of different kinds – reading together, learning spellings and number facts - provide a very important opportunity for young children to talk about what they are learning to an interested adult, and to practise key skills in a supportive environment.

As children get older, homework provides an opportunity for them to develop the skills of independent learning, which they will need to continue lifelong learning and this should increasingly become its main purpose. It is important that children should gradually get into the habit of regularly devoting periods of time, which may not be long, to study on their own. By the time children reach Year 6 their homework programme will cover a wide range of tasks and curriculum content, with a regular weekly schedule. This approach will benefit their learning and also ensure that, in relation to homework as much as to other aspects, their transition to Year 7/Secondary school is as smooth as possible.

Homework will be differentiated to take account of the needs of individual pupils.

We expect every child to learn their weekly spellings at home in the manner in which the teacher specifies. In Foundation and Key Stage one we expect children to regularly practice their key words and 'Learn It's'. We expect key stage two children to practise their times tables; with corresponding division facts.

Home Reading

The importance of reading at home cannot be over-emphasised at any Key Stage, and we hope that children will read for pleasure in their own time. We still expect upper juniors to be heard to read at home

Foundation and Key Stage One pupils will be provided with a suitable school reading book, which can be taken home to read with a parent or other adult person. A record book will be provided for parents to sign when they have listened to or read to their child.

Pupils in Key Stage Two will be expected to take responsibility for their own reading books as necessary but we do expect parents to sign their reading diaries when they are heard read at home. Parents will be asked to sign reading homework to indicate that it has been completed.

Numeracy

Homework will be provided for pupils to consolidate or revise particular mathematical skills. Key Stage 1 and Foundation Stage pupils will be given key 'Learn its' by their teacher.

In Key Stage Two, pupils may be required to learn key facts, for example, helpful rhymes, number bonds or tables and as they get older will receive homework to practise calculation skills.

Activities on other websites will be added to our school website for further practise too.

Religious Education

Children may be asked to complete reading on a religious theme, written homework or discussion with their families. We also ask children to explore matters such as friendship and families. Home research can also be set.

Topic Work

Pupils will be given the opportunity to research topics they are studying in class as they move through Key Stage 2. This research could be sourced from the local library, the internet or from family members.

Pupils will be given the opportunity to feed back what they have discovered to the whole class. Teachers may challenge pupils to undertake the completion of their own topic over a half term or term.

Other activities may include:

Handwriting Practice

Preparing questions

Writing tasks

Puzzles/games

Learning songs or scripts for plays

Physical activities

Investigations

Completing classroom activities – this list is not exhaustive

THE TIME TO BE SPENT ON HOMEWORK

The Government's recommended time allocation, based on current good practice, is set out in Homework: *Guidelines for Primary Schools and Secondary Schools*, and we endeavour to follow this guidance in the amount of time that we ask pupils to spend on their homework. These guidelines and the types of activities that children might be expected to undertake are given below.

Foundation and Years 1 and 2: 1 hour per week Reading, spelling, RE, other literacy and number work

Years 3 and 4: 2 hours per week English and Mathematics as for Years 1 and 2, RE, with occasional assignments in other subjects

Years 5 and 6: 30 minutes a day/a regular weekly schedule with continued emphasis on English and Mathematics but also ranging widely over the Curriculum and including RE.

Homework can be used to finish off work started in class.

The school believes that a regular pattern is important, particularly for English and Mathematics. It will endeavour to establish a familiar routine of when tables and spellings are set and when they are tested. This information will be made clear to parents in the initial Curriculum letter from the class teacher.

INCOMPLETE HOMEWORK

At Holy Cross the majority of children complete their homework on time and produce work of a high standard. However, for those children who do not we have steps to ensure the homework is complete and up to standard expected

These are:

One homework not complete – detention at dinner time to complete the work.

Two sets of homework not complete – detention and verbal warning. Work to be completed in play times and dinner times in silence

Three sets not completed – parents are invited in to talk to the class teacher, work will be completed in the child's own time

Four sets - parents will be invited into talk to the head teacher, work will be completed in the child's own time

This will be on a termly basis.

Class teachers will monitor homework on a weekly basis and this will be available to the SLT.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

Setting the right type and amount of homework for children with Special Educational Needs will need careful consideration by the class teacher and co-ordination with both the SENCo and parents. The objectives of homework outlined in this policy should apply equally to pupils with special educational needs.

Whilst children with SEN may benefit from special tasks separate from the homework set for other children in the class, it is important that they should do as much in common with other children as possible.

Homework tasks for children with SEN should:

- ✓ have a very clear focus and time-guideline;
- ✓ give plenty of opportunities for pupils to succeed;
- ✓ help develop social as well as other skills where necessary;
- ✓ be varied - and not purely written assignments;
- ✓ be manageable for teachers.

We are mindful that specific tasks in the form of Pupil Passport for children with Special Educational Needs will be set. Parents will be made aware of this as appropriate.

MORE ABLE CHILDREN

Extension homework will be provided for children who have strengths in specific areas.

CHILDREN IN TARGET GROUPS

If a pupil is in a targeted support group they may be set homework on any given day by the member of staff that teaches them, this includes TA's and peripatetic teachers This will aid

their learning and will be specific to the pupil's needs. The procedure for homework that is not completed on time will be the same for every member of staff.

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL, TEACHERS, PARENTS AND CARERS IN SUPPORTING PUPILS WITH HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

Role of the school

- ✓ monitor the effectiveness of the homework policy each year
- ✓ support parents with the newer methods of teaching in English and Mathematics by offering parent meetings to put into context the development of English and Mathematics skills from Reception through to Year Six

Role of the class teacher

- ✓ Plan homework as an integral part of curriculum planning and indicate tasks on short term planning
- ✓ inform pupils and parents of homework timetables through discussion in class, at parents' evening and through termly Curriculum newsletters
- ✓ match homework, as far as possible, to the ability of the children
- ✓ provide feedback which encourages pupils to regularly complete tasks
- ✓ feedback should be appropriate to the task e.g.
 - individual comment from the teacher, verbal or written
 - marking of the task within an acceptable timeframe
 - reading diary entry written by pupils or parents
 - recognising homework achievement through assemblies
- ✓ Monitor which children are completing homework and ensuring the children who haven't do it in detention.

Role of the parents/carers

The school recognises that parents and carers have a key role to play in supporting pupils' homework. The nature of this role will change as children get older. For much of their homework, particularly with younger children, parents and carers will be encouraged to become actively involved in joint homework activities.

To avoid 'battles' over homework we recommend:-

- ✓ that children should be allowed to work at an appropriate pace;
- ✓ acknowledgement should be given to their own interests;
- ✓ the task is undertaken at an appropriate time when the child is best able to concentrate;
- ✓ your child may need lots of encouragement, praise and even your company and help for certain tasks;
- ✓ that work at home is perceived as a shared activity;
- ✓ work at home should be planned carefully around other interests to avoid clashes;
- ✓ it should not be used as a threat or punishment.

Your HELP, ENCOURAGEMENT and PRAISE is the key to success.

We ask you to provide a reasonably peaceful, suitable place in which pupils can do their homework – alone, or more often for younger children, together with an adult.

We do not envisage a primary school child spending time in isolation with work he or she may find difficult. Give support and help but do not do the work for the children. Please support children in completing tasks and return work in a tidy presentable state. If your child has had help with their homework – please state this by a note on the bottom. It is helpful for the class teacher to know if your child required help.

Concerns

If any child does not understand a task, parents should encourage them to ask their teacher for further guidance. If you have any concerns about the levels of homework or the content etc., please see your child's class teacher. Do not let your child get upset about homework; if there is a problem come in and speak to the teacher about it.

FEEDBACK

The school recognises the importance of providing prompt and accurate feedback to pupils, parents and carers on how well homework tasks have been tackled and the knowledge, skills and understanding that are being developed. A variety of methods will be used to provide feedback ranging from an appropriate comment of praise, appreciation or area for improvement to a mark, and these will vary according to the age of the pupil.

INFORMING AND CONSULTING PARENTS AND CARERS ABOUT THE HOMEWORK POLICY

The school will use newsletters to inform parents and carers about the school's homework policy and secure their involvement. The Homework Policy and useful information for parents in supporting their child's learning is displayed on the School Website

REVIEWING THE POLICY

The homework policy will be reviewed every two years. Where significant changes to the policy are felt to be required, proposals will be presented to the governing body and parents consulted.