



Homework Policy

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Our Mission Statement

At Holy Cross, we are very proud of our school motto and our Catholic ethos; **Loved, Valued, Challenged.**

Loved: We love one another as Jesus taught us – our friends, our families and those who we may never meet.

Valued: We value everyone – everyone is important; pupils, staff, parents, governors, and members of the community– no matter their race, religion ability or need. We try to live like Jesus taught us.

Challenged: We challenge each other – not only with our learning but challenge each other to be more merciful to others, have a little more understanding of others’ needs and challenge each other to be better people.

Our Vision

At Holy Cross, we aim to develop a caring Catholic community based upon the life and example of Jesus Christ, which envelopes the life and lives of everyone and everything in our school. It is through Christ’s message of love and forgiveness that the children, staff, both teachers and ancillary, 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 support the development of the whole child to his/her full potential. At Holy Cross, everybody matters, therefore we encourage all to show respect to each other and the environment.

Rationale

At Holy Cross we believe that homework is an essential part of pupils’ learning. In line with National Curriculum requirements, homework is set, and children are encouraged to, and expected to establish good homework habits from the beginning of their school life.

- Homework is set regularly as a means of reinforcing and consolidating learning
- Homework is aimed at providing additional retrieval practice based on what the children have been learning that week, half term and prior learning
- Homework should be understood by pupils and parents, and not be seen as an onerous task

At Holy Cross, staff recognise that many of our children pursue out of school activities, including swimming, music lessons, Rainbows, Brownies, Beavers, Cubs, martial arts, etc. and we believe this should be encouraged for curriculum enrichment and personal and social skills development.

We are, therefore, mindful of also providing a balance between social and family time, whilst also encouraging our children’s educational development at home.

Definition

Homework is defined as work set by the teacher to be completed at home, either by the child alone or with the support of an older sibling, parent or carer. Homework refers to tasks given to pupils by their teachers to be completed outside of usual lessons. The main focus of homework will be Maths core skills and Phonics, Reading & Spelling, with occasional tasks to extend and enhance learning across the wider curriculum. Homework will involve some or all of the following activities:

- Reading: independent, shared or paired reading, with possible activities to reinforce comprehension and understanding of texts as children progress through school.
- Spellings and vocabulary extension: learning sounds and spellings; activities to apply spelling rules and patterns to extended tasks.
- Research into an aspect of the curriculum as preparation for, extension to, consolidation of or follow up to work carried out in class.
- Learning number facts and practice of calculation, including problem solving (multiplication tables, number bonds, etc..).
- Completion of the 'Explore' task for their new RE Come and See topic
- Oral practice of the topic Knowledge Organiser and self/parental quizzing.

The nature, type and amount of homework will vary according to the age and ability of the pupil. Additional support for home learning will also be provided for Year 2 and Year 6 children in preparation for their SATs examinations.

Entitlement

All children are entitled to have homework set by their teacher which is matched to their ability and individual needs. Parents are entitled to share in the learning of their child.

Aims

At Holy Cross, we appreciate how important the links between home and school are, and the need for us to work together to ensure a good education for all children. It is for this reason that we believe it is important that children have homework set that will support learning within the classroom.

Homework will be carefully planned to extend learning, enhance and reinforce skills and understanding, and allow children to consolidate and improve their skills further.

At Holy Cross, we are also invested in Research-based evidence to inform our practice. Therefore, this policy has been created using the latest guidance from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/homework>

Through the provision of a variety of activities and approaches to homework we aim to:

- raise standards in all curriculum areas, but particularly basic skills in Maths and English
- create a sound partnership between parents and teachers with regard to children's learning
- consolidate/reinforce pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of work covered in class
- improve pupils' attitudes to learning and independent learning skills

Teachers

In setting and marking homework, teachers will:

- give reasonable time for its completion (including time to complete tasks if homework is not returned)
- match tasks to time and as far as possible to the abilities of the children
- ensure homework is marked in line with the school's Feedback and Marking policy
- provide feedback to children on their progress
- provide additional guidance for parents as part of termly learning meetings, on how/when homework should be completed, including web links, etc. (see Appendices)

Parents

At Holy Cross, we recognise the importance of developing a sound partnership between parents and children with reference to children's learning. Parents will:

- be provided with additional guidance to support learning at home and to help children with homework tasks;
- be encouraged to support the school's homework policy when signing the home school agreement;
- be given feedback on how children are doing with homework through feedback, during parents' meetings and in annual reports.

Monitoring

The Headteacher will regularly review the Policy and Guidelines on behalf of the Local Governing Body, alongside the whole staff team, and will monitor the quality of homework provision through work scrutiny.

Homework – Guidance for Parents/Carers

At Holy Cross, we appreciate how important and valuable good home/school links are and the need for us all to work together to ensure a good education for all children. Homework is an important part of the curriculum for pupils, and in line with National Curriculum guidance we provide regular homework for pupils in all year groups.

We aim to vary the approach to homework according to the age and learning needs of the child and we cannot emphasise too strongly the importance of parents working with their child to ensure homework is completed.

Why do we set homework?

Homework enables children to practice and extend skills learned in the classroom and gives pupils a chance to undertake research and additional learning, as required. It involves parents (and other adults) in the children's work, and we believe that homework encourages and improves independent learning.

How can parents help?

There are many ways you can help:

- Ask the children questions about what they are learning at school (talking helps everyone understand things clearly). The children will have **Knowledge Organisers** with the core knowledge expected of them for each unit of work. Asking a few 'quiz questions' from the Knowledge Organiser will help with the child's retrieval practice and help to embed learning in Long Term Memory. Our impact of learning is that children know, understand, and remember more core knowledge.



- Play word and number games to consolidate early learning of letter sounds, common vocabulary and number bonds.
- Spend a little time, on a regular basis, listening to your child read and discussing the books they have brought home. Encourage your child to read words and books regularly (show them how important words are). Our expectations of children reading at home are listed below.
- Help them to form letters the way they are taught at school starting at the correct point.
- Test what has to be learned e.g. spellings, tables, number facts etc. At Holy Cross we use Spelling Shed and TT Rock Stars and our children have individual logins for these.
- Read what your child has written, and talk to them about their writing: Does it make sense? Is it correctly punctuated, etc.? Is writing neat and accurate? Have they used exciting words?

- Encourage your child to check over his/her work.
- If your child would like an additional challenge - Help your child find out additional facts, e.g. by visiting the library or researching on the Internet.

We ask for your support in seeing that homework is completed conscientiously and in the best possible conditions. If homework is not completed, children are often at a disadvantage in class, as many homework tasks are discussed in class and often inform future learning. Teachers will ask children to complete homework in school if it is not handed in. Time set aside for homework should be respected by the rest of the family. Try to make sure it becomes part of your child's daily routine.

Encourage your child to establish a homework routine which best suits them, e.g. not when they are becoming tired, etc. For younger children, little and often is best – 10-15 minutes daily is a good habit. As children become older they should be encouraged to sustain their concentration for longer periods of time, and to work with increasing independence, depending on their individual needs.

If a child struggles with an activity, try to avoid becoming anxious about it and approach your child's teacher as soon as you can. They will spend more time explaining the task to help you and your child.

Home Reading Expectations

EYFS and Key Stage 1

Children are expected to read at home with an adult 4 times a week. An adult will listen to the child read at school once a week. For every 5 reads the child will get a sticker on a reward chart. After every 25 reads the child will receive a certificate.

The certificates progress to 50 reads, 75 reads, 100 reads, and beyond.

Key Stage 2

Children will be expected to read at least 3 times a week. Children will receive 3 house points for reading at home. Parents are expected to write the 3 reading sessions in their child's reading journal. If a child reads independently, they may also write in their reading logs to show that they are avid readers. It is the three reads with an adult that are counted to their weekly total.

	Number of reads per week	Duration of the reading time	Rewards	Actions for children who have not read.
EYFS and Key Stage 1	5	10 mins	5 reads = 1 Sticker on the chart Certificates awarded to the child for every 25 reads.	1) Contact parent either by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face to face • Class Dojo message 2) Put additional support in reading with the teacher or teaching assistant.
Key stage 2	3	15 mins	3 reads= 3 house points Teachers might like to provide an extra reward of Reader of the month/half term in class competition.	1) Contact parent either by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face to face • Class Dojo message 2) Put additional support in reading with the teacher or teaching assistant.

Exceptional circumstances

We value each child in our school and understand all children are different. Where there are exceptional circumstances, we will work with parents to agree a plan of action so their child will become successful readers that have a love of reading. For example:

- Word games/flash cards used instead of reading at home
- Different reading materials (comics etc.) can be read
- Having a smaller target and working up to 3/5 times a week
- Extra reading in school

What sort of homework should I expect for my child?

Children will bring home reading books every day. Please ensure these are returned when requested. In addition, children will be given tasks to support learning in English, RE and Maths lessons, and occasionally to extend learning in other subject areas. Homework tasks will depend on the age and ability of children, but in general terms the following can be expected:

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2

Children take home **two** books every week.

1. The first book is phonetically decodable book linked to the learning in the phonics lesson that week.
2. The third book is a library book that will be read to the child by an adult at home. This gives children the opportunity to hear a wide range of vocabulary and to develop a love of reading and books.

Year 1

- Reading – Children have a reading journal to record their comments about their books
- Numbots (core Maths skills practice)
- Spellings (including Spelling shed)
- Knowledge Organisers for 'quick quizzing'

Year 2

- Reading – Children have a reading journal to record their comments about their books
- Numbots (core Maths skills practice)
- Times Tables Rock Stars (TTRS)
- Spellings (including Spelling Shed)
- Knowledge Organisers for 'quick quizzing'

Key Stage 2

Homework will include:

- Reading – Children have a reading journal to record their comments about their books
- Spellings (Including Spelling Shed)
- Times Tables Rock Stars (TTRS)
- Knowledge Organisers – Quick quizzing practice

As children progress towards Year 6 they may often be given additional activities and this will also include SATs additional home learning support. It is expected that parents encourage greater independence as children move into upper Key Stage 2.

Sharing of information

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. Information will also be shared by teachers on Class Dojo. 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.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

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 SEND 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 children and parents.

Roles and Responsibilities

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

Parents' 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 quantity of homework or the content, etc, please see your child's class teacher. Please do not let your child get upset about homework. If there is a problem, please speak to the teacher about it.

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 Local Governing Body and parents would be updated.