



St Richard Reynolds Catholic Primary School

Policy: Homework

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Aims

Children at St Richard Reynolds Primary School are expected to work very hard during the day and we encourage a variety of activities, including academic study, to be carried out at home. Homework reinforces and/or extends pupils' learning where it is relevant to the work that pupils are doing at school. We use the term "homework" to include any learning activity that pupils, individually or with their parents/carers, undertake outside school. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, parents play a particularly vital role in the education of their child. We expect that parents/carers will support their child's learning by spending a short amount of time each evening with their child on homework tasks. In Key Stage 1 and 2 parents continue to provide a vital role and it is expected that they will continue to support their child's learning and ensure that all homework tasks are completed.

The purpose of homework is:

- To enable pupils to practise skills and develop an increasing understanding of the work undertaken in school.
- To give pupils opportunities to learn in different contexts, environments and with other people to help them understand that learning goes on in all settings.
- To enable pupils to establish a routine and attitude towards independent learning that will provide a foundation in future years.

We will achieve this by:

- Providing parents/carers with guidance on how to support pupil's learning at home.
- Giving parents/carers a range of ideas and suggestions, some of which will be open ended activities to undertake with their child.
- Setting homework activities that are challenging but achievable.
- Ensuring that clear instructions are given on what pupils are expected to do with homework tasks.
- Setting homework activities that use a range of learning strategies.

Early Years Foundation Stage

In the EYFS, pupils will receive minimal homework however there is an expectation that reading and phonics activities will take place every evening. We use an online learning journal called 'Tapestry' and parents are encouraged to contribute towards their child's learning journal, sharing how they making progress towards their Early Learning Goals at home. Information is share with parent's on how they can contribute and through the document 'A parent's guide to supporting your child in Reception'.

Phonics and Reading

In the EYFS a large part of the homework pupils will receive focuses on their phonic recognition and reading activities as these are skills that underpin many other areas of the curriculum. As the children start to learn the sounds associated with the letters of the alphabet they will bring home flashcards of these letters so the learning can be reinforced at home. Activity ideas will be shared with parents on how to use this resource.

In the Autumn term, children in Reception will begin to bring books home from the reading scheme. Initially these books may not have any words, and these allow children to begin to handle books and explore their vocabulary; discussing what is happening in the pictures and making predictions about what might happen next. As their confidence and skills grow they will progress through the reading scheme exploring the different facets of reading; decoding, remembering, discussion and prediction. Parents are encouraged to spend a short amount of time every evening (no more than 20 minutes) on reading and phonics activities.

In addition to their reading scheme books, children will also have the opportunity to bring home a 'kaleidoscope' reading book. This is a free choice reading book that can be shared with children for pleasure, there is no expectation that children will be able to read this book.

Further examples of home learning:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Encourage pupils to say please and thank you.
- Encourage pupils to share and take turns.
- Encourage pupils to talk about their feelings.
- Encourage pupils to think about issues from the viewpoint of others.
- Let pupils make choices for themselves e.g. this is my favourite car/doll.
- Offer help to pupils with activities when asked, but not before. Encourage them to give things a go.

Communication and Language

- Explain to pupils why it is important to pay attention when others are speaking.
- Share rhymes, books and stories and ask children questions about what they have heard, e.g. what was your favourite part? What part made you smile/sad?

- Play games which involve listening for a signal like Simon Says or Ready, Steady, Go.
- Encourage pupils to develop stories in their play using words such as: first, next, last, before, most, some, each, every.

Physical Development

- Encourage pupils to take his/her coat on and off by themselves.
- Ensure that pupils are able to go the toilet by themselves.
- Ensure that pupils are able to blow their nose by themselves.
- Encourage pupils to handle small equipment, e.g. scissors, glue, knife and fork.
- Talk to pupils about being safe and sensible when using tools, such as the ones above.
- Encourage pupils to use large equipment, e.g. bikes, scooters, climbing frames at the park.
- At the park, let pupils run, hop, skip, jump and find different ways of travelling.
- Talk to pupils about taking care when moving freely.

Literacy

- Visit the library with pupils. Read/share picture books with repetitive language.
- Ask pupils, what is happening in the pictures?
- Sing the alphabet song and talk about the sound the letters make.
- Ask pupils about words that rhyme.
- Encourage pupils to practise writing their name.

Mathematics

- Count as often as you can with pupils, e.g. go on number hunts, count stairs, number songs.
- Practice counting groups of objects such as, toys, food. Discuss which is more and less. How many altogether?
- Read stories with numbers in them, e.g. The Very Hungry Caterpillar.
- Encourage pupils to talk about and identify shapes around them.

Understanding the World

- Talk to pupils about special times, e.g. birthdays and other key events.
- Encourage pupils to explore their natural surroundings, particularly in your local area.
- Encourage pupils to talk about animals and plants that they see.
- Encourage pupils to describe different objects.

Expressive Arts and Design

- Find opportunities for pupils to listen and sing songs and rhymes together.
- Encourage pupils to play imaginatively, e.g. dress up, puppets.
- Provide a variety of things for pupils to use creatively, e.g. paint, pencils, crayons, materials for cutting and gluing.

- Dance to songs and make up actions to go with the words, e.g. Wheels on the Bus.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1 we continue to build upon the foundation laid down in the EYFS, and you may find that some of the suggested EYFS activities continue to be relevant for your child.

In Year 1, as a transitional year, the amount of homework will gradually increase. A big focus of the Year 1 curriculum continues to be reading and phonics, and we expect pupils to read regularly to build the confidence and fluidity required for Key Stage 1.

In Year 2, whilst pupils are encouraged to be more independent they will still require the support and guidance of an adult when completing homework tasks. Consolidating the pupils' knowledge and understanding of reading and phonics continues to play a vital role in their development. We also encourage opportunities to support pupils to progress in their comprehension of the text and to focus and develop their handwriting and spelling when producing recorded work.

What type of work will my child get?

Reading

Reading on a regular basis is vital for children in all years. Children will bring their reading books home every evening, and the role of the adult is to listen and support them. Just 10 minutes a night equates to over an hour of extra support across the week. It is important to remind them to use different strategies to read new words i.e, using their phonics knowledge to sound words out, looking at the pictures and looking for words within words, are all ways in which the child can read an unknown word. Also, take the opportunity to help them with unfamiliar vocabulary. It is also important to discuss the book to check that the child has understood what they have read and support them with developing their comprehension skills; asking questions about what they have read, making predictions about what will happen next, making inferences (using clues in the story to figure out something the author doesn't tell you). Pupils have a reading record which parents/carers should sign or comment in each time they read with the child.

Children are also allocated e-books on our online Bug Club learning platform. The books allocated span a range of genres both fiction and non-fiction and with each book are comprehension questions which are expected to be answered. The questions help develop the children's reading comprehension skills further, as well as the children's answers providing more insight for teachers as to the child's current ability. E-books are usually allocated half termly however frequency of allocations can be adapted according to individual or class needs.

High Frequency Words/Spelling

Children will have daily phonics lessons throughout Key Stage 1, which will also include ways that children can build up a secure sight vocabulary. It is vital that children build up a bank of words which they can read and spell on sight. Word cards and suggestions will come home for pupils to practise reading, writing and spelling. Parents can support their children to learn these, by practising them regularly and often. Children will often receive the same words again in order to practise them further.

Maths

Children are given homework to develop important maths skills. Parents can support their child by giving them lots of opportunities to practise these skills. To help support their maths learning children have their own online learning platform (Abacus: Active Learn). Maths games are allocated to children fortnightly in Key Stage 1 and help children to practise key maths concepts looked at in class and reinforce previous topics. Children should log into their accounts and complete the games assigned to them. On alternative weeks' pupils are set tasks in their Schofield and Sims mathematics workbooks. This work should be supported and checked by an adult. In the Autumn Term, Year 1 pupils are given a number of the day challenge to help build up their familiarity and fluidity of number and place value.

Topic/project work

Our key aim is that homework always directly relates back to the learning happening in the classroom. Occasionally this will mean work relating to their current topic and may include project work. Clear guidelines will always be given by the class teacher and work may be submitted by written, typed or recorded means.

In Year 1, pupils are given a home learning challenge grid at the beginning of each topic which gives suggested activities for them to complete towards their new topics. Pupils are encouraged to complete a minimum of 10 points across a minimum of 3 activities. Evidence should be included in their home learning journals.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2 the children's homework will increase further, in line with their age and with the aim of preparing them for the homework demands of secondary school.

In Year 3, children will receive one main homework task a week. This could be based on any subject or topic which the children are learning about in class. It could be a task to assess their existing knowledge; revise concepts looked at previously; to reinforce concepts looked at in school; or to extend their knowledge further. Instructions will always be given as to how to complete the homework and it is expected that the children spend approximately 30 minutes on this task.

From Year 4 onwards, children will receive 2 main homework tasks a week. One will be a Maths based activity and the other will predominantly be English based, but may have a Topic, Science or other subject theme. The tasks set could be to assess their existing knowledge; revise concepts looked at previously; to reinforce concepts looked at in school; or to extend their knowledge further. The amount of time expected to be spent on each task increases with the year groups. Year 4 are expected to spend approximately 30 minutes per task; Year 4, 40 minutes per task; and Year 6, 45 minutes per task.

Spelling

As well as the main homework task, Key Stage 2 children have spellings to learn each week in preparation for their spelling test. Spelling lists are differentiated and lists of words target the gaps in children's phonic/spelling knowledge. Children are assessed regularly to ensure they are on the correct spelling list.

Reading

Reading on a daily basis should also continue in Key Stage 2. As some children move onto being a free reader in Year 3 this may be time reading alone. However, all children in Key Stage 2 are still expected to read every day and be heard read at least once a week and questioned about what they are reading.

Children are also allocated e-books on our online Bug Club learning platform. The books allocated span a range of genres both fiction and non-fiction and with each book are comprehension questions which are expected to be answered. The questions help develop the children's reading comprehension skills further, as well as the children's answers providing more insight for teachers as to the child's current ability. E-books are usually allocated every 2 weeks and are expected to be read and questions answered before the next book is allocated. Frequency of allocations can be adapted according to individual or class needs.

Maths

To help support their maths learning in school, children also have their own online Maths learning platform, Abacus. Maths games are allocated to children weekly and help children to practise key maths concepts looked at in class and reinforce previous topics. Children should log into their accounts on a weekly basis and complete the games assigned to them.

It is also expected that children are practising their times tables at home. The times tables which need to be learned and practised are indicated by the class teacher. Different strategies can be employed to help the children learn- chanting, songs, games; anything which will help the children to remember them. Within school, the children in Year 3 and 4 will be trying to achieve their Times Table badges and to do so have to know all multiplication and corresponding division facts within that times table. It is expected that children achieve the 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8 and 10 times table by the end of Year 3 and all of the Times Table badges by the end of Year 4. Once all the Times Table badges are achieved the children move onto further challenges using and applying their times table knowledge.

Certain Maths topics appear in everyday life and parents are encouraged to help children with these concepts when they arise. In particular, time, money, shape and measurement. The more the children practise telling the time or using money, the more understanding they will have of it.

Project Based Homework

Occasionally, children are set a project based homework in Key Stage 2, which links to a topic being studied in class. Instructions are given for these projects but children have more of a say in how they will present their homework. Projects can include 3D models, PowerPoint presentations, videos, artwork, posters and pieces of writing; as long as it meets the criteria of the homework. Children will always be given longer than a week to complete a project based homework and usually will be set over a school holiday.