

# St Mary's Bryanston Square

## Homework Policy 2010

### The purpose of homework

is to:

- Develop an effective partnership between the school and parents in fostering children's learning
- Consolidate and reinforce the children's skills and understanding, particularly in English and Maths
- Offer children the opportunity to extend their school learning to the home
- Encourage independent learning

### The type and amount of homework

- The main focus of homework in the primary school is on English and Maths
- In KS1 homework largely consists of regular reading with parents and carers, and looking at books together
- Fluent readers should read on their own for at least 10 to 20 minutes a day in addition to the tasks set each week.
- Other literacy related homework may include learning spellings and practising correct punctuation
- Maths homework can consist of number games and tasks and more formal exercises for older children
- Older children will be given homework gradually increasing in its demands. This may include finding out information, reading in preparation for lessons, preparing oral presentations or more traditional written assignments
- Homework tasks will be differentiated, when possible, so that they are appropriate to the needs and abilities of class groups. At other times tasks are differentiated by outcome, allowing children to respond according to their own ability.
- A homework project may be set during the term, or half term, to develop children's interests and combine different areas of the curriculum. This project could also extend over a holiday period.

St Mary's has adopted the government's recommended time allocation for homework which is shown in the table below. In addition to the tasks set each week fluent readers should read on their own for at least 10 to 20 minutes a day. Younger children (infants classes) should share a book with an adult for at least ten minutes each day,

<b>Year</b>	<b>Recommended Time</b>	<b>Tasks</b>
<b>Years 1 &amp; 2</b>	<b>1 hour per week</b>	<b>Spelling Other literacy work Other numeracy work</b>
<b>Years 3 &amp; 4</b>	<b>1.5 hours per week</b>	<b>Literacy and numeracy as for Years 1 &amp; 2 with occasional assignments and projects in other subjects</b>
<b>Years 5 &amp; 6</b>	<b>2.5 hours per week</b>	<b>Regular weekly schedule with continued emphasis on literacy and numeracy but also ranging widely over the curriculum</b>

Parents will need to use their own judgement in interpreting these time expectations with children who are slow and reluctant in completing homework. Teachers will also give children specific guidance about when they are expected to complete rough drafts and final copies of a piece of work. Although we are committed to the importance of homework, we wish to avoid straining family relationships over its completion.

At some times of the year the amount of homework may vary substantially - for example, during Year 6 SATs revision.

### **Reception children**

Although there is no formal requirement for Reception children to complete homework tasks, parental support and involvement in developing early literacy and numeracy skills is very important. Parents will be given guidance about how to help in these areas at the Reception meeting when their child starts school.

### **Special Educational Needs**

Some children may benefit from special tasks in place of the homework set for other children in the class. However, it is important that they do as much in common with other children as possible. Tasks should:

- have a clear focus for practice and consolidation of a skill -the teacher may only mark the work with this focus in mind
- give plenty of opportunities for the pupil to succeed
- be varied - it may not always be a written assignment
- be manageable for teachers to set and mark

Some children who have additional support in class may receive a homework pack for them to complete extra practice of skills highlighted in their Individual Education Plan. Parents will be advised on how to help with this work.

### **Marking and feedback for pupils, parents and teachers**

- Teachers will always aim to give feedback to pupils on homework as quickly as possible. This will not always be a written individual comment. Some work will be discussed in class or in small groups, possibly with children reviewing their own work under the teacher's supervision. Other work will be reviewed through tests, e.g. spellings and tables. Teachers should reflect on which tasks in a week require an individual written comment and ensure that the workload for that week is manageable for giving children quick feedback.
- In line with the school's Marking Policy, teachers will not always correct all spelling, punctuation and grammar errors. A child's common errors or current learning priorities may be highlighted or the teacher may focus on ideas and content for some tasks.
- Parents who carry out activities with their children may have valuable feedback for teachers on how well their children did the activities and the amount of support the child needed for the activity. Parents are invited to comment in the homework book or to write a note to the teacher.
- All children are expected to take home reading record books daily which allow two-way communication between home and school. We ask all parents to initial or sign the record whenever they hear their child read, and add any comment that may be appropriate. Parents are advised to remember that the National Literacy Strategy has changed the focus of teacher time on a daily basis from individuals to small groups and teachers may no longer see reading diaries every day.

### **Organisational issues**

- Teachers will explain the organisation of homework to parents through the class newsletter at the beginning of each half term. This explains when homework is set and when it is due in.

- Parents should inform teachers if there are persistent difficulties with completing homework. Children will be given enough time to complete homework and should organise their time to complete the tasks on time.
- Teachers will inform parents if children are regularly not completing their homework or if the work is not of a satisfactory standard for that child.
- If children do not have access to research resources for completing homework tasks, the school will provide resources for children upon request.
- Homework should be carefully presented to the level expected in school.
- On those occasions when practical activities are set such as a designing and making task, lists of simple materials which are accessible in family homes will be included.
- There will be occasions when homework will not be set, e.g. preparation for concerts/performances, SATs and National Curriculum Tests, staff absences and other exceptional circumstances. At such times children are encouraged to read.

### **The role of parents in supporting homework**

Parents should:

- Provide a reasonably peaceful and suitable place in which pupils can complete their homework
- Make it relaxed! Enjoyment is the key to success.
- Make it clear to pupils that they value homework
- Encourage pupils and praise them when they have completed their homework
- Be involved in interactive homework when it is set

**If difficulties are encountered, parents must bring these to the attention of the teacher so that the child can be given support at school. We want homework to support children's success without creating anxiety and friction at home.**

Sheelagh Leith, our Learning Mentor, runs a homework club for children and parents on Tuesdays after school.

## Homework Project Newsletter

Dear parent(s)

Our project for this half term is: \_\_\_\_\_

It will form part of your child's homework each week. A project may last for half a term and could include work in the holidays.

### What is a project and why do we do them?

A project is an independent task that gives children a chance to develop different interests and combine different areas of the curriculum. For example, a topic on water could involve learning about the water cycle (science and geography), art work, use of ICT to record data, using maths to sort or present data (graphs, tables, etc), reading relevant newspaper articles (English), etc. It also helps children of differing abilities to show what they can do and be proud of it.

Children will take time to collect the information and need to make their own decisions about what to include and how best to present it, for example. As always, we would like to see the children's work but it may be necessary to guide your child and help them to arrange their ideas.

Please come and see me if you have any questions or need some help,

### Project details:

Yours sincerely

Class Teacher