

POLICY: HOMEWORK

1. Rationale

At St Michael's home work must be meaningful, relevant to 21st Century learning and meet individual needs.

Homework involves "tasks assigned to students by school teachers that are meant to be carried out during non-school hours" (Cooper, 1989, p.7, in Hattie, "*Visible Learning*").

- 1.1. We believe that the most important home work of all is family living:
 - 1.1.1. Lots and lots of family conversation – story telling, jokes, discussions about everything under the sun.
 - 1.1.2. Sharing bed time stories with mum/dad reading to the children.
 - 1.1.3. Independent reading in bed before lights go out.
 - 1.1.4. Family games, life skills activities, counting and hobbies.
 - 1.1.5. Meaningful interactive use of technology.
 - 1.1.6. Selective viewing of TV shows and discussion of these.
 - 1.1.7. Outings to all kinds of places of social, historic and natural interest.
 - 1.1.8. The kinds of imaginative play that comes naturally to children of all ages.
 - 1.1.9. Regular visits to the local library.

Such activities encourage and help children become better learners and happier human beings.

- 1.2. We believe that whilst school homework is a valuable aid, it is not the most important aspect of a child's education. Homework is useful when it allows for the following aims to be met.

2. Aims

- 2.1. For children to be given the chance to consolidate what has been learnt at school.
- 2.2. For homework activities to be set to allow for the fact that children learn and work at different rates and have different needs.
- 2.3. To increase a child's confidence and enjoyment in learning.
- 2.4. To give parents opportunities to encourage, express approval and, in general, relate positively to their child/children.
- 2.5. For children to develop productive long-term habits of learning and planning.
- 2.6. To reinforce reading as an essential component for all primary school children.
- 2.7. To ensure that homework activities are structured so that children and their parents understand what is expected.
- 2.8. To ensure that homework is not a source of worry or frustration for the child, teacher or parent.
- 2.9. To ensure that written work is set at an appropriate level that meets the age and stage of each individual child.
- 2.10. To ensure that homework activities given are relevant to 21st Century learning incorporating literacy and numeracy; and interactive use of technology such as websites and podcasts, where appropriate.

3. Implementation

- 3.1. All children (Kindergarten to Year 6) are expected to read each night. Reading homework set should be from a range of genres.
- 3.2. Levelled reading is to be set at a level that enables a child to consolidate their reading ability and confidence level. No emphasis is placed on racing through the levels or staying on a level that is too easy.
- 3.3. Children in Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2 are given regular reading homework and should be reading for 15-20 minutes daily. This includes the child reading aloud to an adult and being read to by an adult. We actively encourage the practice of 'reading together' – that is adult and child together. Any extra homework given should take no longer than 15 minutes. Structured and/or imaginative play should be actively encouraged.
- 3.4. Homework is given regularly to Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. It is not always of the written kind. Reading homework is given each week. Along with reading it may include spelling, carrying out an experiment, finding answers to problems posed at school or working on a current theme or project that requires the appropriate use of a computer.
- 3.5. Homework will not necessarily be the same for every child in the class. Just as children are taught in group situations in the classroom according to their capabilities, then their homework will be set with this in mind.
- 3.6. Children in Years 3 and 4 spend approximately 20-30 minutes daily on set homework and children in Years 5 and 6 between 30-40 minutes. This will include time for reading.
- 3.7. Homework should not be a source of worry or frustration for the child, teacher or parent. Children are encouraged to complete the assigned work to the best of their ability and seek the teacher's help with any difficulties.
- 3.8. Set homework should be acknowledged by the teacher.
- 3.9. Parents can be of great help to their children by showing interest in their activities and listening to their reading and by being supportive and patient. **Homework is of little value if it is completed by the parent or is not supervised.** Please help and encourage, but allow your child to do his/her own work. Please sign homework. If for any reason the child is unable to do homework, the parent is to acknowledge this by a written note.
- 3.10. Homework is not given when families choose to take holidays during term time – our recommendation is for the child to read daily and keep a journal while away. Homework is not given when children are sick and therefore away from school.
- 3.11. Each class teacher in a grade should work together to produce homework to ensure that there is consistency across all four classes.
- 3.12. If children do not complete their homework a note is made in their diary.

4. Evaluation

An evaluation to take place annually.