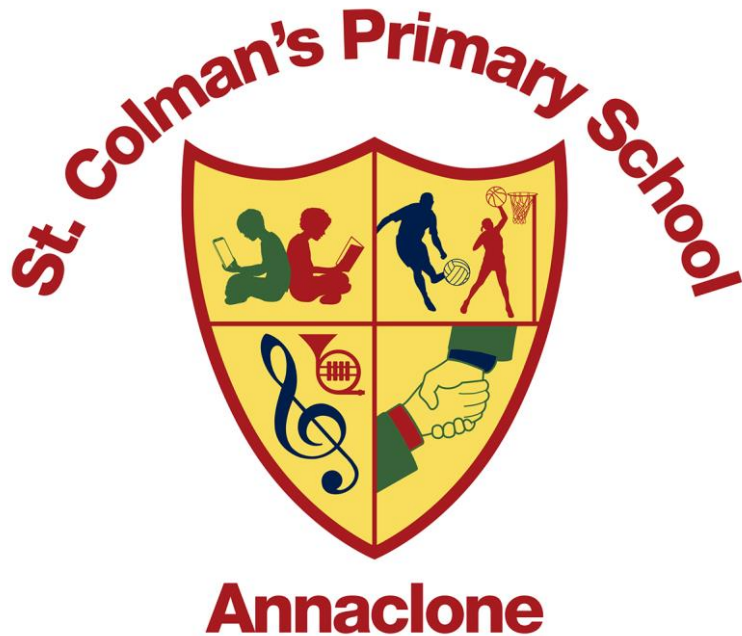


St. Colman's Primary School/ Annaclone



Homework Policy

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Vision Statement

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To be an inclusive, caring School where childhood and community are valued; one, which inspires learning for life and develops the personal qualities needed to succeed in a rapidly changing World. This vision will be best realised as we undergo a continual journey of collaboration and progress through partnership, leading to excellence.

Mission Statement

We believe that each child will succeed through experiencing quality in:

- ☐ A broad and challenging curriculum
- ☐ Innovative teaching and an investigative approach to learning
- ☐ A stimulating learning environment
- ☐ An enriching programme of extra-curricular activities and visits
- ☐ A rich, varied and up-to-date range of learning resources
- ☐ An ethos of support, challenge and encouragement to succeed
- ☐ Learning partnerships between the school, home and parish community

We demonstrate our commitment to working as a learning community by:

- ☐ Striving for continuous improvement in all that we do
- ☐ Working collaboratively towards common goals

Aims for the Pupils

St. Colman's Primary School and All Saints' Nursery Unit (Annaclone), promote high achievement and learning for life by working with the staff and children to:

- ☐ Develop enquiring minds and a spirit of curiosity
- ☐ Promote well-being and the importance of a healthy work/life balance
- ☐ Encourage excellence and the development of new skills
- ☐ Ensure the children in our school are immersed in their community but are also forward facing and expansive in outlook
- ☐ Achieve their highest standards in all areas of the curriculum
- ☐ Have high self esteem – respecting themselves, others and the environment by our positive approach to behaviour thus ensuring that each individual is motivated to do his/her best
- ☐ Utilise and provide opportunities to develop their thinking skills enabling them to work independently or collaboratively
- ☐ Be an integral part of the Parish community – one which fosters a faith commitment to Christ and prepares pupils for a fuller participation in the life of the Church
- ☐ Seek to extend themselves in mind, body and spirit
- ☐ Become highly motivated life-long learners

- ❑ Gain advanced technological skills and an awareness of Global Issues
- ❑ Be flexible and adaptable for the modern world

Our School Values:

- **Happiness and enjoyment**
- **Effort, attitude and perseverance**
- **Team, school and community spirit**
- **Honesty, fairness and trustworthiness**
- **Respect and tolerance**
- **Politeness, kindness and caring**
- **High standards of behavior**
- **Partnerships and collaboration**



Ethos of the School

St Colman's Primary School and All Saints' Nursery Unit sets out to create a caring and supportive environment, where all children can develop intellectually, emotionally, physically, socially, morally and spiritually.

In addition, the delivery of the curriculum is designed to develop interest and motivation in children using enthusiastic teaching and interesting and relevant learning activities.

- Children are encouraged to achieve high standards and are given as much help as they may need in order to achieve success.
- There are many extra-curricular activities that encourage co-operation and discipline through team games. Children are further encouraged through a variety of musical/dramatic productions to develop self-discipline.
- Within this context there is a code of discipline that is consistently enforced to ensure that the education of children takes place in an orderly and caring environment.
- Through continual monitoring of individual children's achievements, class teachers provide work pitched at a level that challenges each child yet does not frustrate.
- Good relationships within the School are vital. The staff set an example by working well together with a harmony of purpose and providing an interesting and caring environment within their classrooms.
- As part of the pastoral dimension of the School, children are taught how to care for others, to respect other people's points of view and to respect property. Children are encouraged to contribute to charity and to help people who are less fortunate than themselves.

Introduction

Homework is anything that children do outside the normal school day, that contributes to their learning in response to guidance from the school. Homework encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents to support children's learning. For example, a parent who spends time reading a story to their child before bedtime is helping with homework.

Rationale for Homework

Homework is one of the best ways of developing and maintaining links between home and the school and will help to raise standards of attainment. It is a very important part of school life and of a child's education and can add much to a child's development. The government made clear its commitment to homework in their White Paper, '**Excellence in Schools**', where homework was seen as 'an essential part of good education'. We recognise that the time and resources available limit the educational experience that any school by itself can provide; children benefit greatly therefore from the mutual support of parents and teachers in encouraging them to learn both at home and at school. Indeed we see homework as an important way of establishing a successful dialogue between teachers and parents. One of the aims of our school is for children to develop as independent learners. We believe that homework is one of the main ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning.

Another aspect of homework is to inform the parent about some of the activities that children are doing in school and this will **allow parents the opportunity to play a leading part in their child's education.**

Homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. It is based on work that the children are doing in school – this helps children to understand that "work" is not just confined to school. Much of the time children spend on homework will be on activities associated with Literacy and Numeracy, including reading, spellings and number work but homework activities will also include a wider range of work in subjects such as the World Around Us, R.E etc.

We, as a school, also acknowledge the important role of play and free time in a child's growth and development. While homework is important, it should not prevent children from taking part in the wide range of out-of-school clubs and organisations that play an important part in the lives of many children. We are well aware that children spend more time at home than at school, and we believe they develop their skills, interests and talents to the full only when parents encourage them to make maximum use of the experiences and opportunities that are available outside of school.

Aims and Objectives of Homework

The aims and objectives of homework are:

- ✓ to enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development;
- ✓ to help pupils develop the skills of an independent learner;
- ✓ to promote a partnership between home and school in supporting each child's learning;
- ✓ to enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered in sufficient depth;
- ✓ to provide educational experiences not possible in school;
- ✓ to consolidate and reinforce learning done in school and to allow children to practice skills taught in lessons;
- ✓ to help children develop good work habits for the future.

Types and Amount of Homework

We set a variety of homework activities. In the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 we encourage the children to read by giving them books to take home to read with their parents. We give guidance information to parents to help them achieve the maximum benefit from this time spent reading with their child. We also ask Key Stage 1 children to learn spellings or mathematical tables as part of their homework. Sometimes we ask children to talk about a topic at home prior to studying it in school. For example, in the World Around Us topic on toys, we ask children to find out what toys were popular when their grandparents were young and, if possible, to bring examples into school to show the other children. Sometimes we ask children to find and collect things that we then use in science lessons, and occasionally we ask children to take homework that they have started in school when we believe that they would benefit from spending further time on it. When we ask children to study a topic or to research a particular subject, we encourage them to use the school and local library and the Internet.

At Key Stage 2 we continue to give children the sort of homework activities outlined above but we expect them to do more tasks independently. We set literacy and numeracy homework routinely each week and we expect the children to consolidate and reinforce learning done in school through practice at home. We also set homework as a means of helping the children to revise for examinations as well as to ensure that prior learning has been understood.

We increase the amount of homework that we give the children as they move through the school. We give all the children a school diary where they or the teacher records the homework, and where parents and teachers make any relevant comments. **The homework diaries in P3 – P7 should be checked and signed each night, by the parent/guardian.** Any comments/homework not completed will be noted in the diary as evidence of incomplete work. **The child's teacher/CA will sign the homework diary on a weekly basis.**

Within the school the homework routine is as follows:

- Children will receive homework every night (Mon to Thurs). It should be neat and tidy, with good handwriting and mistakes rubbed out if required.
- Children need to be encouraged to take pride in their work.
- Homework will reflect the work ongoing within the classroom, so it is important that parents take an interest in the work the children are completing
- All children should attempt their homework; if there is a question that the child cannot do they should leave it out and go onto the next one.
- If homework is not complete/attempted then this will be noted in the child's homework diary.

Written homework should take no longer than 45 - 60mins (P7) – if it does then this should be noted and the child allowed to stop. A prolonged period of time should not be spent on homework this only leads to frustration for both parent and child and is ultimately counter-productive. Children will usually receive their spellings and tables on a Monday and these will be tested on the Friday. Children are encouraged to spend 5-10mins going over their spellings each night. Spelling homework is related to your child's spellings. Spelling homework should be completed over the course of the week.

- About 5mins should be spent going over your child's mental maths/tables (P4-P7) – there will normally be a different set each week. There will also normally be tables homework each night (Mon – Thurs).
- In school children will be heard read 2 - 3 times a week. Parents are encouraged to read with their child, from their reading book but also from other books, newspapers and magazines. Parents **should not** go beyond the reading noted in the child's reading diary. It is vitally important to **talk** about what they have read as this fosters understanding. Children need to be encouraged to read other supplementary books. It is the aim of the school to **"encourage a love of reading"**.
- Children are encouraged to complete some of their homework by using computers at home, if they have access to one.

The school will not provide homework for children going on family holidays during term time. If requested, after an absence of 3 or more days, teachers will send home missed homework. This can be done by contacting and leaving a message with the school Secretary.

Work books, especially RE books will be sent home on an occasional basis for children to discuss with parents.

Textbooks will not normally be sent home.

Weekly Homework Pattern

P 1 (10-15mins)

Some reading with parent is expected daily. Literacy/Numeracy to support class work (through topic) and some Religion.

P 2 (10-15mins)

Some reading with parent is expected daily. Literacy/Numeracy to support class work (related to topic) and some Religion. As the year progresses (Term 2 onwards) some spellings.

P 3 (20mins)

Reading with parents and spellings. Literacy/Numeracy work and some Religion.

P 4 (30mins)

Reading, spelling and tables/mental maths. Numeracy/Literacy and/or one other task from religion, topic (research based)

P 5 (45 min approx)

Reading, spellings, tables/mental maths, and written Literacy/Numeracy/Religion. Children may be asked to finish a task or to do research for a project.

P 6 (45 min approx)

Reading, spellings, tables,/mental maths written Literacy/Numeracy, transfer tests: Topic work/research, Religion.

P 7 (1hour max)

Reading, Literacy/ Numeracy, RE, transfer tests and research for project work.

The work should always have been explained and discussed in class before coming home; it maybe a continuation of classwork, or a maths games already familiar to your child. It is our intention, and good practice, not to send work home that the child cannot already do i.e. parents are not expected to teach new skills.

We expect children to maintain the same standards for presentation of homework as we set in school i.e. to use their best handwriting and a sharp pencil or black pen.

It is our policy not to give homework over the holidays and half term breaks. The exception will be where the parent and teacher agree extra work would be beneficial. Our additional needs teachers may send specific tasks home to support the learning of the children they support. Again, this will be discussed with parents.

Homework – Hints and Tips

Parents need to

- Work out the best time for your child to do their homework – this may not always be straight after they come home from school
- Make sure they have all they need – books, pencils, rubbers, colouring pencils
- Have water available for them to drink – research shows that this helps them to focus
- Find a quiet, comfortable environment – away from distractions like the TV
- Always try the question
- Check over work
- Sign the homework diary

Parents are asked to sign homework and reading diaries daily. Any notes from teachers are put in the homework diaries and each diary is signed weekly by the teacher (normally a Friday)

Parents can help their child by:

- 1 – reading to/with them for 15mins each night
- 2 – visiting the library, especially over the summer
- 3 – listening to what they have to say/talking to them about their day at school
- 4 – promoting good attendance at school
- 5 – allowing younger children plenty of opportunities to cut and stick
- 6 – checking homework and signing homework diaries and ensuring that it is handed in on time – **please do not do it for them**
- 7 – attending parental consultations and airing concerns at an early opportunity

Pupils with Special Educational Needs

We set homework for all children as a normal part of school life. We ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to the ability of the child. If a child has special needs, we endeavour to adapt any task set so that all children can contribute in a positive way. When setting homework to pupils who are named on the register of special needs, we refer to the Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

The Role of Parents

Parents have a vital role to play in their child's education, and homework is an important part of this process. We ask parents to encourage their child to complete the homework tasks that are set. We invite them to help their children as they feel necessary and provide them with the sort of environment that allows children to do their best.

Parents can support their child by providing a good working space at home, by enabling their child to visit the library regularly, and by discussing the work that their child is doing.

We ask parents to check the home/school diary every night and to sign it as requested.

If parents have any problems or questions about homework, **they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher.** If their questions are of a more general nature, they should contact the principal. Finally, if they wish to make a complaint about the school homework policy or the way it is implemented, parents should contact the governing body.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to agree and then monitor the school homework policy. This is done by the governing body through curriculum issues. Our governing body may, at any time, request from our principal a report on the way homework is organised in our school.