



Home Learning Policy St. Theresa's

Introduction

At St. Theresa's Parish Primary School, we acknowledge school is not the only place where learning happens. The time children spend with their families and their involvement in out of hours activities are important components of the development of the whole child. Activities such as art lessons, sports practice, cultural activities, out of school hours care, the learning of a language or musical instrument etc. are all considered to be valuable learning activities that place additional demands on family time.

This policy reflects the current Department of Education and Training Guidelines and expectations. These can be located at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/curriculum/pages/guidelines.aspx>

Research

Researchers are divided in their opinion as to how effective home learning is for children. Some researchers believe homework can help students develop study skills and habits and can keep families informed about their child's learning. Whilst other researchers have found that home learning has no effect on the progress of primary school children.

Definition

Home Learning involves children being engaged in learning activities outside of school hours. It provides opportunities for families to be involved in their learning and education and strengthens the partnership between the school and the family. It encourages responsibility for learning to be taken by all, including children, parents and the school.

Home Learning provides an opportunity for children to develop positive dispositions that will assist them as life-long learners. Through Home Learning activities, children are able to consolidate skills and pursue areas of interest whilst informing their families of what they have been learning about at school.

Aims:

Our school believes that Home Learning should include some of these elements:

- Involve parents and carers in their child's education
- Have a clear learning focus
- Give plenty of opportunities for children to succeed
- Be planned by teachers alongside the other elements of children's learning
- Consolidate and reinforce a wide variety of skills and understanding in a supportive environment
- Extend in school learning
- Be varied-not just written tasks
- Provide children with the opportunity to learn in different settings

- Reflect a range of learning styles
- Develop progressively according to the age of the children
- Encourage children to talk about what they are learning
- Encourage children to develop the self-confidence and discipline needed to study independently
- Prepare children for the transition to secondary school
- Be manageable for teachers
- Where possible, tasks will have a clear learning intention and success criteria, in line with our teaching and learning policy, to enable every child to succeed with their home learning tasks.

Implementation

At St. Theresa's we believe a child's wellbeing together with competent literacy and numeracy skills and are essential for learning.

We understand that each family and their situations are different. In recognition of this and so that all children can engage with their family in home learning, our teachers support home learning activities that can be completed over a period of time.

We believe that each child is unique and therefore learning cannot be viewed in the same way for every child. This also applies to home learning and therefore a variety of tasks may be set and children along with their teachers and family can select those that are appropriate and important for that child.

Reading at home to, with and by adults is an essential part of developing literacy skills. For children in the early stages of reading, opportunities will be provided for this to take place in the form of "Take Home Books" at an easier reading level than the classroom level. For those more proficient and independent readers they will be encouraged to read books of their choice appropriate to their development and interests.

Junior School - Foundation, Year 1, Year 2

- ✓ Children will always have a take-home book or other suitable reading material to read. Children will be encouraged to share a variety of reading materials with their parents for approximately ten minutes each night
- ✓ Children will be encouraged to practise their counting and number facts regularly to reinforce work done in the classroom.
- ✓ Children will have words to learn over a week.
- ✓ At times, unfinished learning tasks may be sent home for children to complete.
- ✓ At times, children will be encouraged to work on class projects at home.
- ✓ Home learning will generally range from 5-15 minutes a day at Prep, Year 1 & 2.

Middle School - Year 3 and Year 4

- ✓ It is highly recommended to read for a minimum of 10 minutes each night and to have reading materials documented and signed by an adult.
- ✓ Children will be encouraged to read a variety of material, e.g. take-home books, library books, comics, magazines and newspapers.
- ✓ Children will be encouraged to practise their times tables and number facts regularly to reinforce classroom activities.
- ✓ At times, children will be encouraged to work on class projects at home.
- ✓ At times, children will be asked to complete unfinished learning tasks at home.
- ✓ Children who have any difficulties with any aspect of Home Learning will need to see their classroom teacher before the due date.
- ✓ Classroom teachers will correct and assess Home Learning and provide timely and practical feedback and support for each child.
- ✓ This will generally range from 15-20 minutes a day at Year 3 and Year 4.

Senior School - Year 5 & Year 6

- ✓ Children will receive home learning tasks on a weekly basis.
- ✓ It is highly recommended to read for a minimum of 20 minutes each night and to have reading materials documented and signed by an adult.
- ✓ Children should always have a literature book or other suitable reading material on hand to read, eg newspaper, magazines. Children will be encouraged to read a variety of reading materials (electronic and print) both aloud and to themselves.
- ✓ Children who have any difficulty with aspects of the Home Learning should see their classroom teacher before Home Learning is to be handed in.
- ✓ Children should practise their times tables and number facts regularly to reinforce work done in the classroom. The importance of this aspect of mathematics cannot be stressed enough.
- ✓ At times, unfinished work may be sent home for children to complete.
- ✓ The presentation of Home Learning is important and parents and teachers will encourage students to be as neat in the presentation of Home Learning tasks as they would be in the classroom.
- ✓ All set Home Learning will be corrected at school.
- ✓ Students are encouraged to hand in the completed Home Learning by/on the due date.
- ✓ Home learning will generally range from 20-30 minutes a day at Year 5 and Year 6.

EXPECTATIONS:

Parents and caregivers can help their children by:

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- Encouraging them to take increasing responsibility for their learning and organisation.
- Observing and acknowledging their success and asking how their Home Learning is progressing.
- Encouraging them to set aside a regular daily session to read and complete home learning.
- Contacting the relevant teacher to discuss any problems their children are having with Home Learning.
- Reading the Termly overviews and viewing the classroom blogs.
- Helping them to complete Home Learning by discussing key questions or directing them to resources. Usually it is better to encourage children to complete Home Learning themselves.
- Checking whether Home Learning has been set and ensuring they maintain their diaries.

It is important that as we continue to work towards developing partnerships between home and school we communicate openly about our needs and expectations in promoting the best learning situation for the children.

Important points to consider:

- Students spend from 9am to 3.15pm in formal learning at school
- Many parents find it difficult to find quality time with their children in the evening after work
- Many students are involved with out of school hours activities, including those students who attend After School Care
- Home situations are diverse
- Some of the best learning occurs in everyday family life e.g. helping in the kitchen, shopping, playing games and sharing interests with the family, talking and listening