

St. Giles Junior School.

Homework Policy

At St. Giles Junior School we value our home-school partnership, working with parents to enable children to achieve their full potential and increase their learning.

We seek to foster an "active" educational partnership between home and school. In order to enable parents/carers to support their child's learning at home, we have prepared a "Homework Policy" to guide both teachers and parents. In this policy, homework is defined as any work or activities which children are asked to do outside lesson time, either on their own or with parents/carers. We hope that families will support the work of the school by familiarising themselves with the type of homework set and helping their children to develop routines.

Rationale for homework.

Homework is a very important part of a child's education. It can add much to a child's development. The government made clear its commitment to homework in the 1997 White Paper, "Excellence in Schools", in which it described homework as "an essential part of good education". Children can benefit greatly from the complimentary learning they do at home. We see homework as an important example of cooperation between teachers and parents. One of our aims of our teaching is for children to develop as independent learners, and we believe that doing homework is one of the many ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning.

Homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment. However we also do 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 activities of a variety of out of school clubs and other organisations that play an important role in the lives of our children.

The purpose of homework: The aims and objectives.

- To provide opportunities for parents, children and the school to work in partnership,
- To enable our children to make maximum progress in their academic and their social development,
- To help parents gain insight into their child's schoolwork, to consolidate, revise or extend skills and understanding ~ particularly in Numeracy and Literacy,
- To provide additional educational experiences that may not be possible in school,
- To help children to develop good work habits for the future,
- To encourage pupils as they get older, to develop the independent study skills and self discipline required of them at secondary school,
- To make use of resources for learning at home.

What is homework?

The main focus for homework across the school will be Literacy and Numeracy, with additional subjects being added as children progress through the year groups. Despite the formal sounding labels of "Literacy" and "Numeracy", homework will not always appear in the traditional style of written tasks. The term "homework" encompasses a wide variety of activities, for example:

- Reading with an adult,
- Reading independently and discussing content / plot / vocabulary with an adult,
- Visiting the library or using ICT to find information,
- Finishing work from class,
- Learning spellings,
- Practising number facts or multiplication tables,
- Reinforcing, consolidating areas of numeracy,
- Practising a musical instrument,
- Preparing oral presentations,
- Preparing research or a project, using ICT
- Written work.

How much homework will be set?

The following plan offers a guide as to how much homework each year group should be set per week. It is based on the recommendations set out in the DFEE publication "Homework : Guidelines for Primary and Secondary Schools."

Weekly homework time allocation.(In line with the DfES GUIDELINES 1998)

Y3-4	15-20 minutes per night.	Reading, spellings, tables, literacy, (comprehension) numeracy work(Mental maths) and occasional consolidation and research in other subjects.
Y5	30 minutes per night	A regular weekly schedule with continued emphasis on reading ,spellings, tables, literacy (Comprehension and writing), numeracy (Mental maths) but also ranging widely across the curriculum, involving Science (particularly in Year 6) research and project based work.
Y6	30/40 minutes per night	

Teachers may ask children to do additional homework tasks under the following circumstances.

When a child needs to finish off class work, having failed to do so at school having had a reasonable amount of time.

Children with special educational needs may have an individual education programme (I.E.P.) devised for them. This may involve doing some special activities outside the usual homework schedule. Parents of these children will be informed of what is required by class teachers.

If a child produces unsatisfactory work in class, they may be asked to repeat it at home.

The setting of homework

Monday:

Children will be given their spellings and times tables to learn for the week. Some homework is best achieved through a 'little and often' strategy therefore we ask that our children practise their reading, spelling and times tables daily.

Thursday:

Children will be given their Literacy and Numeracy (Science in Year 6) homework.

Other homework will benefit from an uninterrupted working time (for example, a comprehension, mental maths, science work.).

However, we do not anticipate the maximum time spent on homework in an evening to be longer than 20 minutes in years 3 and 4, 30 minutes in year 5 and up to 40 minutes in Year 6. If the child does become worried, frustrated, anxious about their work, please contact the teacher.

Time spent working with the child should be "Quality Time." We would encourage a positive relationship regarding homework.

Special Educational Needs

Children with special educational needs will follow the same content and expectations as other children wherever possible. Some tasks might reflect the personal targets that the child has been set in their Individual Education Programme. Parents receive copies of these and can discuss with the teacher and/or Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator ways to reinforce and help their learning and achievement with homework. IEP work would take priority over class homework.

When homework will not be set

It is important to recognize that at some times of the school year, it will be inappropriate to set homework. These times would be the start and end of terms, during parents' interviews, during test weeks and during concert or event weeks. It is also important to note that a supply teacher may not be asked to set homework during teacher absence.

The organisation of homework.

We ask our children to record the homework that they are given in their "Homework Diary." This is a useful tool as it serves as reminder of the work that the children have to do. We would like parents to sign this diary when the children have completed their work and make a comment if they wish. They can also use it to ask any questions or raise any concerns with the teacher. This is then a valuable form of communication. The teacher will sign the diary when the homework has been returned and also respond to any comments made.

Parents can support their child by:

Asking their child to explain the task, which will indicate that they understand what is required of them and helping the child to organise their approach.

Giving their child plenty of encouragement to complete the homework to the best of his/her ability and, for older children, independently.

Helping their child to establish a routine, plan their time and organise themselves to complete the task and return it to school at the correct time.

Praising their child for their effort and where necessary independence with completing the task, even if errors were made.

Provide a calm, suitable place in which their child can do their homework with minimum distraction.

Ensure their child has the appropriate writing materials and resources for carrying out the homework

Make it clear to their child that homework is important and explain how it can help their learning.

To respect their child's methods of working.

Sign the reading record / homework diary to show that they have seen the homework and make any comments about how the work was completed.

Teachers will implement the policy by:

- Setting the homework programme in accordance with the school policy.
- Making tasks and deadlines clear to children.
- Using praise and reward where appropriate.
- Marking written assignments as promptly as possible. Providing feedback.

Children are expected to:

- To complete their homework diary regularly.
- To approach homework positively and co-operate with parents and teachers.
- To complete and hand-in tasks on time.
- To complete the homework to the expected standard of which they are proud.
- To care for any homework related books, diaries or equipment.
- To ask for help when faced with difficulties in understanding or completion.

Monitoring homework

All children will have a homework diary. This will be used for recording the work which the children are expected to carry out. It will also provide the means for parents to keep themselves informed of what is expected and record their comments.

Class teachers will maintain appropriate records that will indicate that homework has been completed on time and to an expected level of understanding and standard. If it is felt that children are not achieving their full potential with homework, parents will be informed and we will try to address this to everyone's satisfaction.

If homework is not done regularly, parents will be informed in writing. If there is no improvement parents will be asked to meet with the class teacher to ascertain the reasons for this and agree on a line that will achieve success.

Monitoring and reviewing the policy

We aim to review this policy document regularly. Members of the management team will collect a sample of KS2 homework diaries and evaluate the written comments of parents. We will also assess to what extent the homework programme contributes to pupil progress and whether effective home ~ school communication is occurring.

October 2007