

ST. FILLAN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL



HOME LEARNING POLICY

Introduction

Homework is a vital element of a child's education. In St. Fillan's Primary School our aim is to co-educate children to the highest possible standard in partnership with parents. This is to ensure that each child has the opportunity of reaching their potential and is able to eventually take on a full role in today's ever-changing society.

Homework offers a rich opportunity for children to consolidate knowledge and develop skills at their own pace and level of attainment. It also fosters an ethos of study skills which will be invaluable as the children progress through life eg thinking, planning, researching and using technologies. A homework diary will be used to record information and facilitate two-way communication between school and home. With the exception of Primary 1, homework is generally issued on a Monday and due for return later in the week. This will allow pupils to develop their time planning skills, as well as allowing some flexibility to fit round out of school activities which are also of great benefit to pupils. Primary 1 pupils will receive a lesser amount of homework on a daily basis, Monday to Thursday.

Aims of Homework

- To consolidate and reinforce learning carried out in school and to allow pupils to practise skills taught in lessons
- To enable pupils to make maximum progress in their academic and social development
- To help pupils develop the skills of an independent and successful learner
- To promote partnership between home and school in supporting each child's learning
- To enrich many aspects of their learning eg discrete curricular areas, interdisciplinary learning, achievements or areas of leadership
- To help pupils develop a good work ethic for the future

Progression and Format of Homework Tasks

Children will have the opportunity to complete a wide variety of homework tasks during their time at St. Fillan's Primary School. Although core homework will centre on Literacy and English and Numeracy and Mathematics, homework can be carried out for any curricular area. Tasks will become increasingly complex and pupils should be encouraged to take more responsibility for the planning, completion and checking of homework as they progress through school. Tasks set may be written, oral, applying research skills, requiring a creative input or the use of technology.

Early Level (normally to the end of Primary 1 for most pupils)

- To encourage reading activities at home (for learning purposes as well as for promoting a love of reading and interest in books and texts)
- To develop language through talking and listening
- To practise phonics and word building
- To begin to read and write simpler high frequency words
- To reinforce core numeracy and maths skills
- To discuss topics at home and bring in any information to support/ add further interest to class study

First Level (normally to the end of Primary 4 for most pupils)

- To encourage reading aloud at home to develop expression and fluency
- To begin to unpick texts in order to understand them better. Focus will begin to move away from purely remembering facts and understanding texts. In addition pupils will be encouraged to analyse and evaluate texts through homework activities.
- To continue to read a wide range of texts at home for enjoyment
- To encourage the use of language skills via discussion. This may involve gathering information from family members to support class work or preparing for solo presentations
- To consolidate and extend children's ability to apply spelling rules
- To increase ability to read and write high frequency words with a good degree of accuracy
- To consolidate and reinforce numeracy and maths skills through a variety of activities
- To provide opportunities for interdisciplinary learning to allow skills to be applied across areas and research skills to be used
- Full Learning Logs to begin to be used in Primary 4 to encourage creative approaches to planning and recording learning

Second Level & Beyond (P5 to P7 for most pupils)

- To promote and encourage reading for enjoyment. Texts should be more complex and should include a wider variety of genre
- To be able to interrogate texts at a deeper level. Text vocabulary and structure will also be more complex and challenging
- To reinforce and use a wider range of vocabulary
- To prepare note cards, presentations or other resources to support longer solo talks
- To reinforce and consolidate literacy skills taught in class eg spelling, grammar and punctuation

- To increase ability to read and write more complex high frequency words with greater accuracy
- To begin to revise and consolidate learning carried out within our Modern Foreign Languages programme (currently Spanish)
- To extend mental agility and mathematical thinking through a wide range of challenging tasks
- To carry out more detailed research work to support interdisciplinary learning
- To independently record learning in Learning Logs using set criteria
- To use a wider range of technology to support learning

Monitoring

Homework completion will be monitored by class teachers. Whole school monitoring of homework will be carried out by the Senior Management Team to maintain an overall view of homework across the entire school.

What Parents Can Do To Support Learning

- Encourage your child to settle in a suitable place to complete homework, away from possible distractions
- Encourage your child to complete homework to the best of their ability
- Oversee any written work your child has (but don't do it for them)
- Join in any active homework that requires adult involvement (eg active spelling, maths work, topic research etc)
- Support your child in ensuring homework is received / returned to school
- Provide your child with suitable equipment for homework (eg pencils, rubbers, rulers)
- Sign off homework diary every week
- Use the diary as a communication tool to the teacher (diaries are usually checked at the end of each week so remind your child to advise they have a message if written midweek)
- Support our homework policy by working in partnership with your child and his/ her teacher

What Can Pupils Do To Help Themselves

- Remember to take homework home and bring it back on time
- Ensure you know what to do before taking the homework home. Write it in your diary and check in with your teacher if you still don't understand it, after having had it explained to you. Your teacher will be happy to explain it again.
- Let an adult know you have homework

- Find somewhere away from distractions to do your work - in front of the TV is not a good idea
- Take responsibility for own homework and resources - get organised
- Attempt your work on your own first before asking for help
- Present your work as neatly as possible
- Use the public library and computer (with supervision) to help you with your homework
- Remind an adult to sign off your homework diary

What Teachers Can Do To Support Learning

- Communicate homework expectations to pupils and parents
- Set homework on a regular basis which will reinforce learning from school
- Explain any homework set to pupils
- Use homework diary to communicate with parents
- Try and keep to agreed days and times for setting homework as much as possible
- Discuss any problems with the child (or parent) if and when they arise
- Allow children an appropriate length of time before having to submit homework
- Set homework Monday to Thursday (no homework at weekends - family can choose to carry out additional work if they wish however homework will not usually be set over a weekend)

Resources

Homework resources will vary and can change from term to term. For reading pupils may have a core reader, a novel to read or a library book home for reading, depending on what aspect of reading your child is working on. Talk homework may be required to help your child prepare for their writing focus. Maths may require reinforcement via additional practice or your child may be asked to apply their maths skills in a real context. Project work may require research, discussion or gathering information to share with others in school. Homework can be given across not only the eight curricular areas but also across the four contexts for learning which underpin your child's entire learning experience in St. Fillan's Primary School (ie curriculum, inter-disciplinary learning, recognising achievements and the life and ethos of the school).

Reviewed October 2012

St. Fillan's Staff/ Parents / Pupils