

# **ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL**



## **ST. JOSEPH'S HOMEWORK AND FAMILY SUPPORT POLICY**

**THIS POLICY WAS REVIEWED/ADOPTED:**

**Autumn 2023**

**This Policy will be reviewed as and when required**

## **St Joseph's Homework and Family Support Policy 2023**

We know that in the early years (0–7) a child's cognitive, social and emotional development is significantly affected by what is happening at home and the degree of parental involvement in their education. If we can help our families to provide a better home learning environment and to better support their child's learning during the Foundation Phase then they will be exerting a powerful lever to help children achieve their potential.

### **What are the best things for families to do to support learning to help our children become resilient, reflective, resourceful and reciprocal learners?**

The most effective ways in which families can support children to learn during the Foundation Phase are:

- conversations that encourage children's natural inquisitiveness and love of learning (parents/carers answering on average 23 questions per hour!) while also developing language and communication skills
- play, including role play, to encourage purposeful talk
- reading stories, talking about the pictures
- teaching songs and nursery rhymes
- playing with letters and numbers, pointing out numbers and shapes around them (e.g. door numbers)
- painting and drawing developing one-to-one correspondence, e.g. matching socks
- visiting the library, museums and galleries
- outdoor trips to parks, woods, beaches
- supporting social and emotional learning
- helping their child to be 'ready to learn' when they start in the Reception year at school.

### **Family workshops to develop parent/carer skills**

Research shows that parental support programmes which focus on both academic outcomes and training in parenting skills are the most effective. Our Family Links Nurture Programme provides workshops to help families to build parenting skills, such as the development of positive discipline strategies and coaching skills, that will establish good home environments to support learning.

### **Reading**

Regular reading is vital. Every child should be encouraged to read for at least 10 – 15 minutes daily to an adult at home and we strongly suggest that you

also read to your child daily, regardless of their age. For older children, the Reading Record Book that goes home with your child's reading book gives an opportunity for daily dialogue between home and school. Please record the page to which your child reads in their book each night, along with the date and any comment on their reading you may want to make. Remember to ask your child questions about their reading to develop their comprehension skills. They may read aloud beautifully but lack understanding of the themes or details in the text.

### **Weekly English and/or Maths homework**

Each week your child's teacher may send a piece of maths and English work home for them to complete. The length of task will clearly be proportionate to age, with our older children needing to spend longer amounts of time in order to prepare them for the homework given at secondary school. In Nursery and Reception, this homework is usually limited to reading booklets beginning in the second half of the Autumn Term. From Year 1 upwards, children are likely to receive a piece of English homework and/or a piece of maths each week. This must be completed in pencil. Please see the table on the next page for a summary of homework in each class.

### **Counting, number bonds and times tables**

Don't forget the basics if you want to help your child with maths at home. It is essential that you practise counting with your child from the earliest stage, and throughout their time with us. In Nursery, this will involve counting to 5 and 10, though you should remember that it's useful to start at numbers other than 1 and encourage your child to continue from that point once they are familiar. As they get older, they will use numbers to 20 in Reception, and in Year 1 could be counting confidently within 100. Children in Year 2 will certainly work within 100 but could move on to numbers to 1000. Counting is an essential part of developing a sense of number and an understanding of place value. Working within 100, children shouldn't just count in 1s to 100. They should be challenged to start at different points, count backwards as well as forwards, count on or back in steps of different sizes. E.g. start at 37 and count on in twos. Older children will find counting just as valuable. Their understanding of place value will be tested. Counting on and back in steps of different sizes is still important, but with larger numbers.

Tables can be very tricky for a small number of children to learn and we may decide not to force this for those who really struggle. However, it is certain that a thorough knowledge of the tables is hugely important for all aspects of

maths. Children begin their understanding of tables by being asked to count in 2s, 5s and 10s. If children don't learn the tables they may struggle with division and multiplication related questions and problems as they grow older. They can learn through counting – 'two, four, six, eight...'; and by chanting the table – 'One two is two, two twos are four...'; both methods are useful.

### **School Book Bag**

School Book Bags are available to buy from the school office (£5). Please label with your child's name and work with school to grow respect and a love of books.

### **Online resources**

HWB, SeeSaw

Read Write Inc free resources for parents

### **Typical homework routines in each of our year groups**

Nursery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●All children are allowed to take a free choice reading book home</li> <li>●RWI (QR Codes) sounds to be learned at home</li> <li>● 'Rhyme of the Week' may be shared</li> <li>●RE/Concept based project</li> </ul>
Reception	Levelled Reading books (children in Reception year, when ready) ●CAPER book ●Literacy/Phonic sound sheets ●RE/Concept based project
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Reading books ●CAPER book Homework book containing a piece of maths and /or English each week</li> <li>●RE/concept based project</li> </ul>
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Reading books ●CAPER book Homework containing a piece of maths and English each week</li> <li>●RE/ concept based project</li> </ul>

### **How long should my child spend on homework and how much should I help?**

The precise amount of time spent on homework is much less important than the quality of work produced. It is important to be flexible so that if pupils have a busy week of activities planned for at home they can fit in the relatively short amount of time required to complete their tasks at some point during the week. You are encouraged to support your child with their homework. If you did not, you would have little idea about the level or type of work expected of your child, or of their strengths and difficulties. Please discuss the work with them. Ask questions and probe their understanding, but strike a balance

between supporting and doing it for them. If they can't complete a task with a few practise goes or a little prompting, we need to know so that we can recap in school.

**What if we don't understand?** Parents of younger children must ask if they are unsure about the requirements of their child's homework (or any aspect of school life) and older children can be responsible for speaking to the teacher about any homework they find tricky (though again, parents are welcome to contact us for clarity if they wish, as some children can be anxious if they find work difficult). We strive to differentiate week to week homework tasks to ensure that they are at a suitable level for your child – not too easy, not too difficult. Please let us know if you feel that the level of work is not right for your child.

I am sure we will occasionally send homework that is a little confusing. If that is the case, please let us know. If pupils encounter difficulties with any piece of homework, it should be put away and brought back to school the next day, to ask the class teacher for some help. Children are certainly not expected to struggle on if they find something too difficult. Whilst we always aim to develop the children's resourcefulness, resilience and encourage them to be 'up for a challenge', schoolwork is not important enough to get upset about!

**Thank you for the excellent support you continue to give to your children and to our school.**