
Homework Policy



Let Your Light Shine

2011
to be reviewed
2014

Policy Statement

St Francis Xavier's Catholic Primary School seeks to recognize the individuality and dignity of young people and foster the development of each one's unique potential and spirituality. (*A Vision Statement for Catholic Schools, 2002*). Consequently, at St Francis Xavier's, we are committed to providing quality teaching and learning programmes that enable all students to maximize their individual talents and capabilities for lifelong learning. (*BOS K-10 Curriculum Framework 2002*).

Rationale

At St Francis Xavier's Catholic School we believe that homework provides students with opportunities to consolidate their classroom learning, pattern behaviour for lifelong learning beyond the classroom and involve family members in their learning. The setting of homework takes into account the need for students to have a balanced lifestyle. This includes sufficient time for family, recreation and cultural pursuits.

At St Francis Xavier's we believe that homework:

- allows for practising, extending and consolidating work done in class
- provides training for students in planning and organising time
- develops a range of skills in identifying and using information resources
- establishes habits of study, concentration and self-discipline which will serve students for the rest of their lives
- strengthens home-school links
- reaffirms the role of parents and caregivers as partners in education
- provides parents and caregivers with insights into what is being taught in the classroom and the progress of their children
- provides an opportunity for children and adults to interact in learning outside of the school environment.

Four key factors underpin homework for St Francis Xavier's Primary School children:

- Children are not little adults and therefore cannot be expected to study at home as adults may study, nor to work as adults may work. Children spend six hours a day at school and are usually tired or "filled" with school learning by the end of the day, and therefore homework should not be overly stressful or create unnecessary anxiety or tension in the home environment.
- The best homework a child can do is "family living" - talking, listening, playing and sharing interests with siblings and parents. It is these things, which promote learning about life and enhance the values of the child. Adults should give family time to children.
- Homework is more effective if children can see their parents genuinely engaged in the same or similar activity thus providing a model of appropriate attitudes to learning.
- Homework is more effective if adults provide positive feedback to children about their work. This not only encourages further learning but also reinforces success for the child.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Homework is most beneficial when:

- it reinforces and extends classwork and consolidates basic skills and knowledge
- it is challenging and purposeful, but not so demanding that it has adverse effects on the student's motivation
- students take responsibility for their homework, supported by their parents or caregivers
- it is well coordinated and teacher expectations are well communicated
- it is set on a regular basis and establishes a routine of home study
- teachers set suitable amounts of homework which are varied and at an appropriate level considering the age, stage of schooling and capabilities of students
- it takes into account students' home responsibilities and extracurricular activities such as sport
- it is marked promptly and accurately
- feedback and follow-up are provided regularly to students

The amount of time that students are expected to spend on homework will depend upon the age, ability, home environment and extracurricular activities of students, including family and cultural obligations. It is important that students of all ages have opportunities for free time, leisure and physical activities outside of school.

The three main types of homework are:

Practice exercises - providing students with the opportunities to apply new knowledge, or review, revise and reinforce newly acquired skills, including:

- consolidation exercise e.g. maths, including the learning of tables
- practising for mastery e.g. spelling words
- revising information about a current topic
- practising words or phrases learnt in a language other than English
- reading for pleasure

Preparatory homework - providing opportunities for students to gain background information on a unit of study so that they are better prepared for future lessons, including:

- background reading
- reading e.g. English text for class discussion
- researching topics for a class unit of work
- collecting items e.g. geometric shapes.

Extension assignments - encouraging students to pursue knowledge individually and imaginatively, including:

- writing e.g. a book review
- making or designing something e.g. an art work
- investigations e.g. science, HSIE
- researching e.g. history, local news
- information and retrieval skills eg. using a home computer to find material on the Internet
- monitoring e.g. advertising in particular newspapers.

Incomplete work

There may also be occasions when children are required to take home work that was not completed in class. This work may be in addition to the normal homework they receive.

Responsibilities

Parents and caregivers can help by:

- taking an active interest in homework
- ensuring that there is time set aside for homework
- encouraging and supporting students to complete homework
- providing, where possible, a dedicated place and desk for homework and study
- encouraging their children to read and take an interest in current events
- assisting teachers to monitor homework by signing completed work if requested and being aware of the amount of homework set
- communicating with teachers any concerns about the nature of homework and their children's approach to the homework
- alerting the school to any domestic or extracurricular activities which may need to be taken into consideration when homework is being set or corrected.

Teachers can help by:

- explaining to students and their parents or caregivers the purpose and benefits of homework
- ensuring students and parents or caregivers are aware of the school's homework expectations
- providing quality homework activities related to classwork
- setting a suitable amount of relevant homework which is appropriate to the ability of each student
- ensuring that students are aware of what is expected of them, and how their work will be assessed
- marking homework promptly and appropriately, maintaining homework records and providing feedback to students and parents or caregivers
- suggesting strategies that can be used to assist their children with their homework.

Students can help by:

- being aware of the importance of homework
- being aware of their school's expectations
- completing homework within the given time frame
- alerting parents or caregivers to homework expectations
- seeking assistance from teachers and parents or caregivers when difficulties arise
- showing their homework to their parents or caregivers
- ensuring homework is of a high standard
- organising their time to ensure that sufficient time is given to quality homework within set deadlines.

BUDGET

To set an appropriate amount from within the school budget that will ensure the effectiveness of this English Policy.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed every three years or as required by CSO or Board of Studies amendments.

Class	Collected	Time per night	Reading	Home Readers	Type of homework that may be given
K	Weekly	15minutes (including reading)	Every night	Yes Changed Monday and Wednesday	Practice
1	Weekly	15minutes (including reading)	Every night	Yes	Practice Preparatory
2	Weekly	20 minutes (including 10min reading)	Every night	Yes	Practice Preparatory
3	Weekly	20 minutes (15 min reading additional)	Every night	No	Practice Preparatory Extension
4	Weekly	20 minutes (15 min reading additional)	Every night	No	Practice Preparatory Extension
5	Weekly	30 minutes not including reading	Every night	No	Practice Preparatory Extension
6	Weekly	30 minutes not including reading	Every night	No	Practice Preparatory Extension