



ST MARY'S HOMEWORK POLICY

There has been extensive research into the value of homework. There is little consensus in the literature as to whether homework raises student achievement. "Most researchers conclude that for primary students, there is no evidence that homework lifts academic performance." (NSW Dept. of Education and Communities Homework Policy 2012)

At St Mary's we support the current research that indicates that homework needs to be relevant to each child's learning. We also believe that due to the changing nature of society we must respond with greater flexibility by recognising the stresses placed upon families today.

With this in mind homework will be comprised of daily reading, sounds, sight words, spelling revision, (words will be provided by the teacher) and number facts practice.

Homework will be comprised of:

- Daily reading - read to and read with your child, discuss the events, character's actions, the setting. Encourage your child to read independently - both for pleasure and information. Teachers will be monitoring home reading.
- Spelling - learn sounds, sight or spelling words each night, look cover, write, check, make words letters / words using play dough, write on a variety of surfaces e.g. chalkboard, crossword puzzles, find a words.
- Investigations to complement class learning will be set by the teacher as required.
- Separate homework will be sent home for students undergoing the Reading Recovery and EMU programs.

Suggested activities parents can do with their children:

- Oral language development - vocabulary discussions, conversation skills, story telling, asking and answering questions, newspapers (can be accessed online or in hard copy format), making up rhymes and limericks.
- Written English development - write a story, write lists, write emails, notes.
- Playing board games - e.g. boggle, scrabble, Pictionary, hangman, Cranium, Upwords, jigsaw puzzles, number puzzles e.g. Sudoku, Guess Who? and Guess Where?
- Mathematics - practise number facts e.g. addition and subtraction, friends of 10, times tables, skip counting by 2's, 3's, 4's, 5's, 6's, 7's, 8's, 9's, 10's (on and off the decade), counting forwards and counting backwards, doubles.
- Playing board and card games e.g. Uno, Snakes and Ladders, Bingo, Yahtzee, fish, memory, concentration.
- Maths conversations linked to:
 - shopping - discuss money and addition, subtraction, multiplication and division;
 - measurement - discuss litres, millilitres, grams, kilograms, centimetres, metres, millimetres;
 - time - both analog and digital through travel, cooking, shopping, home renovations, sport.
- Learning and saying formal and informal prayers, reading the Parish bulletin together, discussing current events and those who may need our prayers.
- Suggested online learning sites:
 - Khan Academy
 - Storybird
 - Spellingcity
 - Zoowhizz
- Learning experiences such as visits to the Powerhouse Museum, Art gallery, the Zoo and similar family venues.

HOME READING

'Adding ten minutes of reading time dramatically changes levels of print exposure.'

Cunningham and Stanovich (1998) isolated the benefits of reading experience from the effects of other factors. They found that, even among students with lower general intelligence and weaker reading skills, extensive reading was linked to superior performance on measures of general knowledge, vocabulary, spelling, verbal fluency, and reading comprehension.

At St Mary's we believe that developing Literacy skills is essential to a child's development as an independent and confident learner. We ask that each child read with an adult and/or be read to every night. This should be a positive experience. If the reading material is too hard, please see your child's teacher.

In Kindergarten, Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 (where needed) guided readers and home readers will be sent home for this purpose. In Years 4, 5 & 6 guided readers form the basis for reading. All students are encouraged to borrow library books.

Children will often bring the same book home more than once. This is in order to develop fluency and confidence. As skilled adult readers we read in blocks of words or phrases. This aids our ability to take meaning from what we read. Children need to have opportunities to do the same. Reading texts one word at a time discourages children from expecting reading to have meaning or 'make sense'. Please support us in this process by discussing what the story is about and praising your child as they read.

EVALUATION

The staff will evaluate this policy at the beginning of each year and whenever necessary.

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

Policy Date
February 2015

Review Date
February 2016

Signed: _____
Principal

Date: _____