



St Vincent de Paul Senior School

Homework Policy

Introduction

A review of the existing homework policy was carried out in 2021 to ensure our Homework Policy promoted consistency and similar approaches to homework throughout the school. It has been formulated in the light of guidance and suggestions for the best practice from the DES, IPPN, the NPC and INTO. The policy was reviewed in June 2024, as part of our schools' Self-Evaluation, through a collaborative process involving the staff, pupils and parents.

Why give homework?

It is the mission of St Vincent de Paul Senior School to develop the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral, emotional and spiritual well-being of all our pupils and to create a pleasant, secure and happy environment. We aim to provide a broad balanced educational experience which promotes a positive attitude towards learning and enables the pupils to recognise their talents and experience success and satisfaction in what they do. The Homework Policy has endeavored to uphold this statement and to continue to encourage a meaningful engagement with learning outside of the classroom.

Homework is given for the following reasons:

- To maintain regular communication between the school and parents/guardians
- To establish good study habits and to encourage the children to be responsible for their learning
- To practise and reinforce what has already been covered in the class
- To provide an opportunity for the child to work independently and develop self-discipline
- To engage parents/guardians as educational partners in an active way by being involved in their child's learning
- To give parents an opportunity to monitor their child's progress.
- To provide an opportunity for the child to use alternative resources at home, e.g. parents, library, environment, media and IT.



St Vincent de Paul Senior School

How often is homework given?

- Homework is normally allocated every day, Monday to Thursday, leaving the weekend free for family activities.
- Homework is explained in school in advance every day and adapted to the capabilities of each pupil.
- Homework is checked by teachers and a signature from parents/guardians in school journals should indicate that homework has been checked.
- Homework will be shared in homework journals or on Seesaw/Google classroom at the discretion of the teacher. Completed homework tasks may at times be requested to be shared with the teacher via this platform.
- Occasionally, at the discretion of the Class Teacher or the Principal, pupils may be given a night “off homework” as a treat or as an acknowledgement of a special occasion in the school.
- Homework will generally consist of a selection of the following: Reading, spellings and math tables revision. Parents/guardians play an important role in listening to reading and in the revision of spellings and tables, thus ensuring they are well done.
- Project work provides an opportunity to further explore a wide range of subjects within and beyond the core curriculum. Project work is generally conducted as a classroom based activity, which encourages further research, team work and presentation skills that are centered around the children’s own interest in a topic. Although our school’s approach to project work is classroom based, there may be some aspects of project work which require home based tasks, such as research and links with family/community. Project assignments are part of a whole school approach to encouraging the use of alternative resources at school and at home and are used to encourage children to extend their learning opportunities in a meaningful way.
- The month of June will be used to assign meaningful tasks that encourage the children to engage with the curriculum in a more creative and active way. Teachers appreciate that it is a month when the weather may be especially good and the children may be extra busy with after school activities and social activities. Therefore, assignments will be given to accommodate and reflect this time of the school year.



St Vincent de Paul Senior School

Completing Homework at Home-Recommendations for Parents/Guardians

- It is recommended that children are encouraged to complete homework tasks in a quiet place and away from distractions.
- Parents/guardians should set aside a time each day for homework, taking into account other needs such as recreation and family circumstances.
- Homework should be attempted to be completed within a reasonable time frame. If, for any reason it is not possible to complete within the time allocated, this should be communicated to the teacher through the homework journal.
- Parents/guardians should try to encourage a positive attitude towards homework and encourage children to work as independently as possible.
- While parents/guardians are encouraged to supervise their child's homework and help if necessary, they should not do their work for them, as this is counter-productive.
- Homework will be differentiated for pupils as needed and this will be communicated to parents/guardians of those pupils by the class teacher.
- Oral language activities have huge importance and reading should be listened to daily and encouraged as an informal activity at home. While parents/guardians are encouraged to listen to reading and to be active in oral language activities, teachers may request recordings via Seesaw/Google Classroom of oral language tasks, to encourage and assess the child's participation.
- Shared reading should be an enjoyable activity between parent and child. If it is not enjoyable, shared reading should not be done and this should be communicated to the teacher.
- Parents/guardians should sign their child's homework in their homework journal to indicate that homework has been checked.



St Vincent de Paul Senior School

How much time for homework?

The following are the recommended times for completion of homework:

Second Class	20- 30 minutes
Third Class	20-30 minutes
Fourth Class	30-40 minutes
Fifth Class	40-50 minutes
Sixth Class	45 minutes - 1 hour

- Pupils will complete homework assignments in different lengths of time and this time can vary from day to day and every family situation is different. It is important to remember that it is the quality of homework that is handed in and not on the quantity that importance is placed.
- Parents as educational partners are valued by the school. However, if the child is having difficulty completing homework, the preference from Class Teachers and the Principal is to tell the child to stop and for the parents to communicate any difficulties through the homework journal. This will help the teacher gauge and review homework for that child or for the class.
- There is an expectation that homework should be completed to the best of the child's ability and around the recommended times. However, homework should not become stressful and it is the parents' responsibility to communicate issues to the teacher.
- Homework will not be assigned to children who are absent from school for illness or who have taken time out from school for holidays.

Completing homework- Recommendation for Students

- Write down homework correctly in the homework journal
- Check your bag before going home and before going to school to ensure that you have the books/resources you need.
- Try to start your homework as quickly as possible after school.
- Do your best with your homework. Work as independently as you can.
- **If there is a problem, let the teacher know. Do your best to present your work neatly and on time.**



St Vincent de Paul Senior School

Assessing Homework:

- Homework is differentiated for pupils where needed.
- Teachers will set success criteria for standards of homework which will be shared in advance with the children.
- The teacher will give regular feedback to children on their work. For example, feedback may be given verbally or in written form.
- Self-assessment involves children thinking about their own learning. It is a reflective process that empowers the child to take greater responsibility and personal awareness of their work. Children will be involved in assessing their homework tasks which will be linked to the success criteria as set in advance by their teacher.
- Acknowledgement will be given to those who make a personal effort through a positive response/praise, as decided by the class teacher. Rewards may be given at the discretion of the class teacher e.g. written and verbal praise, stickers, homework passes.
- Teachers will take note of children who regularly struggle with homework or who regularly do not complete homework. In these cases, the teacher will consult with the parents to identify issues which may impact on children's ability to complete homework. The teacher can advise on how parents can support their children with homework.
- Children who have difficulties with completing homework at home will not be expected to complete homework on Friday or over the weekend. The approach from the school is to consult with parents about homework issues and to support the child and parents towards completing homework assignments to the best of the child's ability.

Remember: If homework is a stressful experience for child and parent, something is wrong! This leads to a poor experience for the child, tension at home, defeats the whole purpose and is unnecessary. Please, contact the class teacher if this happens on a regular basis.

The Homework Policy for St Vincent de Paul Senior School was reviewed by the Board of Management in June 2024.