



St Patrick's School Homework Policy

RATIONALE: Professor John Hattie (leading educational researcher and chairman of AITSL) says, "Homework in primary school has an effect of around zero" (Visible Learning, 2013). This meaning that homework shows little benefit to a student's academic growth, and in fact, it can actually be detrimental to the student.

At St Patrick's, our focus is on teaching and learning during school hours. We do not believe it is our role to tell parents what they and their children need to be doing outside of school hours. Parents and families are under a lot of stress these days and forcing students and parents to complete activities at home can be detrimental to the family environment. Also, setting homework means that teachers must mark it and provide feedback. We believe our time is better spent and more productive engaging in explicit teaching focused on new content and revising old.

In saying this, studies have shown that opportunities for repetition can help children transfer newly learnt concepts in to their long-term memory. Opportunities for repetition include: revising concepts taught in class, reading, spelling and number facts. New concepts or activities not previously taught should never be sent home as homework.

We understand that some parents want their child to engage in homework after school. This is a personal preference and as such we would support parents in reading to their children, listening to their children read, revision of spelling words, revision of number facts, engaging in physical and social activities and having meaningful conversations regarding health and well-being.

READING AT HOME: Reading is the foundation that underpins all we do at school. Effective reading instruction focuses on the development of phonemic awareness to phonics; that is hearing and saying the sounds in words then segmenting and blending those sounds to decode words. At this early stage it is just as important to hear an adult read fluently to them as it is for them to read themselves. Once they become proficient decoders and start to read, the focus becomes on building fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. It is important to discuss tricky words with your children as this will help build their vocabulary. It is also important to discuss the use of punctuation such as commas, full stops, quotation marks and exclamation marks as knowing when to pause, stop and express themselves will aid in their fluency development. You can also discuss with your children information about characters, interesting facts or ask them to predict what will happen next before, during and after reading. This will assist in building their comprehension. Reading at home is essential and will be of great benefit to your child as they progress through their schooling and life.

GUIDELINES: Whilst homework has been proven to have little to no positive effect on student learning, opportunities for repetition has. Therefore, the following guidelines have been put in place:

- a) Set tasks are clearly defined to the child by the teacher.
- b) Set tasks are for revision and repetition only.
- c) Set tasks are not set as teaching of new concepts.
- d) Set tasks are reasonable based on resources to which a child would normally have access to at home.
- e) Set tasks will not be set over the weekend or school holidays.

TIME ALLOCATION: The following is an approximate guide to the time allocated, on a daily basis, for a child in each year level:

Pre-Primary	Up to 10 minutes for reading
Junior Primary (Years 1,2)	Up to 15 minutes for reading
Middle Primary (Years 3,4)	Up to 20 minutes for reading and written work.
Upper Primary (Years 5,6)	30 minutes for reading and written work.

EXTENDED ABSENCES: If your child is absent from school for extended periods of time due to a family vacation or other reason, the teacher is under no obligation to provide work. However, the teacher may be able to assist you with ideas to support your child whilst away.

