



## ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL HOMEWORK POLICY

### Rationale

At St Joseph's, we recognise that the purpose of learning at home is to:

1. Support student growth and achievement in meaningful ways.
2. Strengthen the partnership between home and school through positive engagement with learning.

Recent research highlights that **formal homework tasks in the primary years offer little to no academic benefit** (Cooper, Robinson, & Patall, 2006; Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Approaches to Homework, 2014). Instead, evidence consistently shows that **reading for pleasure and engagement at home is one of the most powerful contributors to long-term academic success, vocabulary development, empathy, and wellbeing** (OECD, 2011; Sullivan & Brown, 2015; EEF, 2021).

For this reason, our school prioritises **reading as the cornerstone of learning at home**.

### Beliefs about Reading

- Reading is fundamental to all learning and communication.
- Reading improves comprehension, critical thinking, and fluency.
- Reading fosters empathy, imagination, and self-confidence.
- Children thrive when reading is a shared, enjoyable activity.

We value:

- Children reading to themselves
- Children reading aloud to others
- Children being read to
- Shared reading experiences
- Conversations about texts to deepen comprehension

## Aim

Our approach to learning at home is designed to:

- Improve students' **reading skills** (comprehension, fluency, vocabulary).
- Encourage a love of reading for **enjoyment, curiosity, and learning**.
- Build strong **family-school partnerships** by engaging parents and carers in meaningful ways.

## Implementation

All students are expected to engage in **regular reading at home** throughout the week.

Suggested times:

- **Junior students (Prep–Year 2):** 10–15 minutes per night
- **Senior students (Years 3–6):** 15–30 minutes per night

Reading may include:

- Independent reading
  - Reading aloud to someone
  - Listening to a parent, sibling, or carer read
  - Shared or paired reading
  - Talking about books, characters, and ideas
- Each student will receive a **Reading Diary** to record home reading, which teachers will review regularly.
  - Students will have access to level-appropriate books and are also encouraged to explore a variety of texts of personal interest.

## Role of Parents and Carers

Parents and carers can support reading at home by:

- Reading with or to their child
- Listening to their child read
- Providing time and space for reading
- Talking about books and asking questions to promote critical thinking
- Encouraging a wide range of reading materials (stories, information texts, newspapers, digital texts, etc.)
- Signing the Reading Diary

## Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed in **December 2027**, in consultation with staff, families, and students, and updated in light of the latest educational research.

## Key References

- Cooper, H., Robinson, J., & Patall, E. (2006). *Does homework improve academic achievement? A synthesis of research, 1987–2003*. Review of Educational Research, 76(1).
- OECD (2011). *PISA 2009 Results: Learning to Learn – Student Engagement, Strategies and Practices*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- Sullivan, A., & Brown, M. (2015). *Reading for pleasure and progress in vocabulary and mathematics*. British Educational Research Journal, 41(6).
- Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) (2021). *Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2*.