St Mary’s Primary School Homework Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to establish a policy that sets forth the basic expectations of students in regards to homework.

Rationale:

Homework, in a primary school, has long been set to:

- Reinforce work done during the school day
- Inform parents of work being undertaken at school
- Develop good work habits for students
- Prepare students for high school

Unfortunately however, there is little evidence of the benefits of homework for children in Primary School.

“American educationist and homework researcher Harris Cooper acknowledges that while there is a correlation between homework and good results for senior students, it is difficult to prove that homework is responsible for better grades. It may simply be that more academically able students tend to do homework. He says there is no correlation between good grades and the amount of homework done for primary students.”

“Schools continue to advance the notion that homework is somehow a means to ensure success. This is a furphy.” (Dr Michael Carr-Gregg, Sydney, 2004)

Many researchers, teachers and parents agree that student learning would be enhanced by exercising, socialising and taking part in family activities. (see Appendix 1)

Policy:

Each weeknight children will be expected to:

- Read – this can include individual reading, reading to others or being read stories by others
- Revise and learn weekly spelling and/or sight words
- Revise and practice number facts appropriate to the child’s stage

In normal circumstances students should not be required to spend more than 30 minutes per night on homework.
While homework is usually set only on Monday to Thursday nights some children may be happy to use their weekends to read, revise and practice. This extra attention to school work should not be discouraged.

During school time children will be taught to undertake projects and/or assignments which require individual work and research skills. Children will be encouraged, but not expected, to improve their knowledge and skills through further work or research at home.

Consequences for non completion of homework:

- Teachers will encourage all students to complete their required homework activities. Encouragement may take the form of awards or rewards.
- Parents should ensure that children are involved in the required reading, spelling and number work on a regular basis.
- If homework is not completed it is the child’s progress which will be affected as a consequence. Children will not be given punishments for non completion of homework.

Definitions:

Homework: Work assigned by teachers to be completed by students outside of school hours.

Procedures:

Nil

References:

Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn Education Office.
http://www.ceo.cg.catholic.edu.au
APPENDIX 1:

Family Activities

**Hikes**--Taking a hike is a great way to get outdoors and get some exercise. National parks offer free trails to hike and many acres to explore. Activities such as scavenger hunts can add a little more structure to the hike.

**Gardening**--Gardening is a wonderful family activity. Not only can the whole family get involved, but everyone can benefit from the harvest. Since it's winter, you might just start with a family plan for the garden. What will be in it? Try to include flowers, vegetables, and herbs everyone likes. How big should it be?

**Astronomy**--View the stars from your own backyard. Local newspapers often publish a regional "sky watch" that you can use as your guide. Start with something easily identifiable, like the "Southern Cross." Consider going to a local planetarium or observatory to learn about the night sky.

**Clean-ups**--Participating in nature clean-ups or volunteering to do trail maintenance are activities that teach kids that they have the ability to do something positive for the environment and community. When parents get involved, they model responsible environmental behavior that will help instill those values in their children.

**Other outdoor family ideas**--Depending on the weather, consider biking, water skiing, cross-country skiing, tobogganing, or birdwatching.