



Home Learning: Should this be done only at home?

Throughout the week at St Augustine's we run a supervised hour long lunchtime Home Learning Club in Room 19 for pupils who would like some support and guidance with their work. Pupils are also able to access the library and our ICT rooms at lunchtimes.

Throughout the year many departments offer opportunities for pupils, particularly those in KS4, to stay behind after lessons to work on projects or to give them extra assistance.

If you have a library near to your home, this is also an excellent location for a child to work. At home, if at all possible, encourage your child to work in a quiet place where there is no distraction from the television.



Home Learning: How is feedback given?

Our approach to feedback is to let children know:

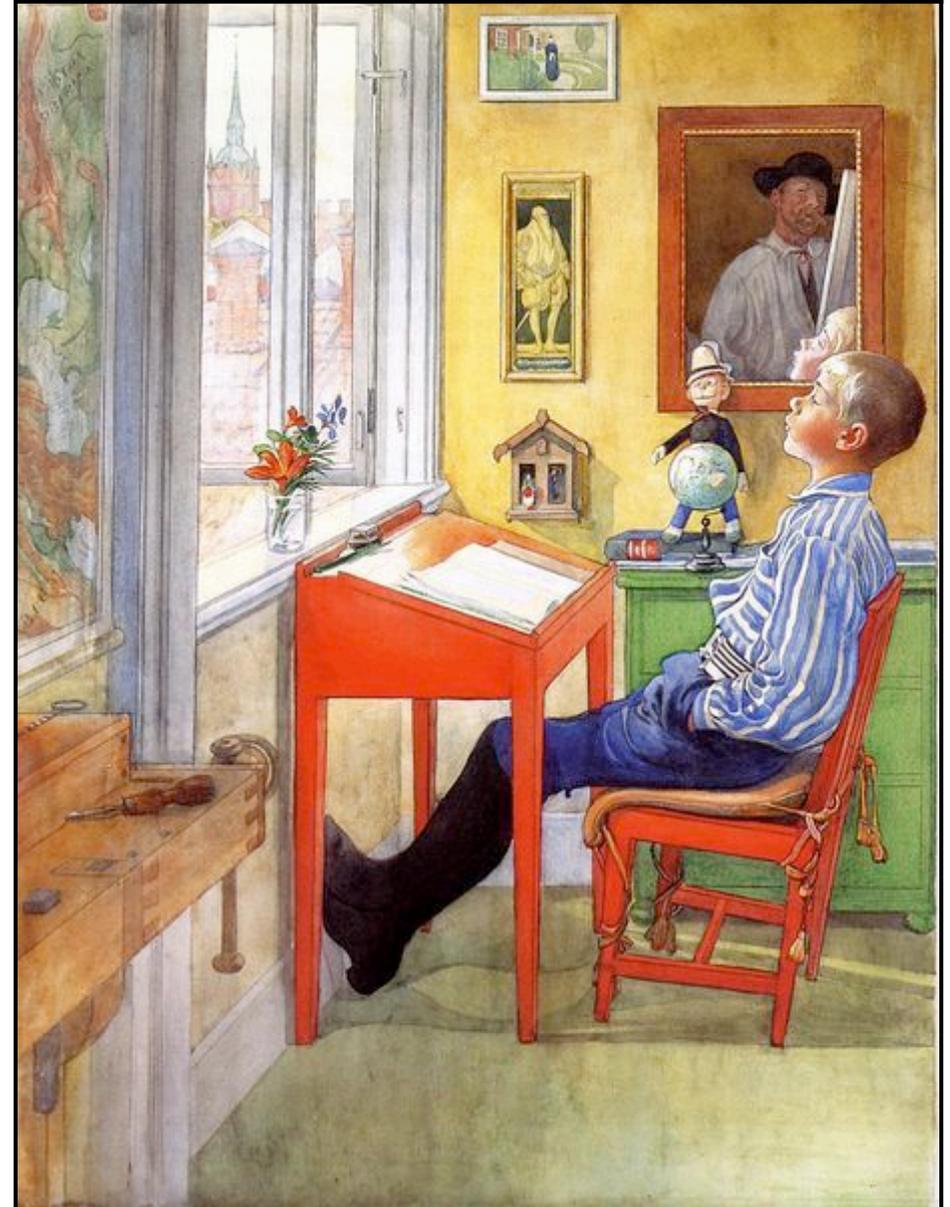
i] How well they have done and ii] How they could do better

This may not always happen through written comments from the teacher. Sometimes, work will be discussed in lessons or teachers may give written comments on just one or two aspects of a piece of work. If you have any queries, comments or concerns about any aspect of the feedback given to your child, again we would be grateful if you would contact us on 01254 823362 and the office staff will put you in contact with the appropriate person.

St Augustine's guidelines for parents and guardians

Home Learning

November 2011



Introduction

Over recent times there have been enormous changes in secondary education. Extensive research into how children learn most effectively has pointed to the need to rethink the dynamics of the classroom. The "didactic" model of the teacher in front imparting knowledge to rows of children still has a crucial role to play. However, whereas in the past this teaching style was dominant, sometimes to the exclusion of other approaches, it is now one of a range of teaching styles used in schools. For example, children consistently place a high value on well-structured paired and small group work and on independent learning making use not only of books but also of new technologies including the internet.

Within a decade teachers have moved from chalk sticks to dry-wipe markers and then on to Interactive White Board pens - from dusty blackboards to large display monitors which can be connected to educational software packages, DVDs and the internet. These changes will also impact on learning that takes place outside of school. Traditional approaches to "Homework" cannot be preserved in aspic if there is a perception among pupils and teachers that these no longer serve their purpose. This is why many schools across the country have been taking stock of how and for what purpose they set and mark homework.

Our approach to Home Learning

At St Augustine's our view is that when we give children learning tasks to be completed outside of school they should be stimulating, linked to what is going on in lessons and where possible, encourage independent research and personalised learning.

Home Learning: How is it structured?

Our school website has home learning timetables for each year group. This information has already been sent home with your child, but you can also download it from www.sarchs.com. Click on Year Groups on the left panel, this brings up five Year Pages [7-11]. Click on your child's Year Page and there will be a link to the home learning timetable.

Home Learning: How much time should it take?

St Augustine's follows the DfE broad guidelines for secondary schools:

Recommended times for Home Learning

Years 7 and 8:	45 to 90 minutes per day
Year 9:	1 to 2 hours per day
Years 10 and 11:	1.5 to 2.5 hours per day

The Department for Education notes that "Children should not be expected to spend significantly longer on homework than the guide times set out above. It does not matter if activities do not take as long as the guide times as long as they are useful. Schools and teachers are expected to organise homework carefully so that children are not expected to do too much on any one day."

Home Learning: What sort of tasks will be set?

Again, we follow the advice from the Department for Education. Their guidelines state:

*"Homework should be related to work that children are doing at school. However, homework **should not always be written work**.
[Their emphasis]
For older children, homework may include: reading, preparing a presentation to the class, finding out information, making something, trying out a simple scientific experiment, cooking."*

Home Learning: Should parents and guardians help?

Our view is that children are likely to get more out of an activity if parents get involved - as long as they do not take over too much! Most parents and guardians take a strong interest in their children's learning and we are keen to encourage this. Helping out with home learning is an obvious and practicable way of engaging with and supporting your child. However, there are times when teachers will make it clear that they want to see what children can do on their own.

It is particularly important for children, as they get older, to become increasingly independent in their learning. If you are unsure about what your role should be, please do contact the school on 01254 823362 and ask to speak to your child's Year Leader, Form Tutor or Subject Teacher. We are always pleased that parents show interest and we want to help you get the balance right.

Home Learning [HL] Diaries: How are they used/monitored?

All our pupils have been issued with a HL diary. When teachers set HL tasks they will give pupils sufficient time in lessons to record what they have to do. They will also indicate by when HL tasks have to be completed. Parents are asked to check and sign their child's diary every week. There is a space on every page for parents and teachers to write comments or requests. We encourage parents to make use of this facility. Form teachers also monitor HL diaries at school during registration time.