

Homework Policy

Rationale:

- To reinforce what the child learns during the day.
- To provide a link between teacher and parent.
- To develop a child's concentration skills.
- To promote good work habits.
- To enable the child to work independently.
- Homework is meant to be achievable by a child, that is, it provides an opportunity to practice work similar to that already done. It is normally prepared by the teacher in class. However, sometimes with more senior classes, some homework is designed to challenge children's ability and provide opportunities for creativity.
- Children are expected to do their homework to the best of their individual ability – no more, no less.

1) How often is homework given?

1. Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, but not on Fridays. There are two exceptions:
 1. If homework has been neglected by a pupil or pupils during the week.
 2. In senior classes, some project work is undertaken at weekends.
2. Sometimes, at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given "Homework off" as a treat or as acknowledgment of some special occasion.
3. Please note extra homework may be sometimes given during the week, or at the weekend, if a child has a) not done homework. b) not made a reasonable effort. c) presented untidy work.

2) What is the content of homework?

- Ideally, homework will contain a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and written tasks.
- This balance is not always possible and can vary considerably from day to day. However, it should be noted that homework time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work.
- Homework will regularly contain reading, spellings, tables, written work, pieces to be "learned by heart", drawing/colouring, collecting information/items and finishing work started in class.
- Children often feel that reading and "learning by heart" is not real homework. Parents can play an important role in listening to reading and to items to be learned, ensuring this work is done well.

3) How much time for homework?

The following are guidelines for time spent at homework. Different children will complete the same homework in different lengths of time. Time spent will vary from day to day, and also from the beginning to the end of the school year. It is important to remember that it is the quality and not the quantity of homework that matters.

The following are general guidelines only:

- **Junior Infants** 0-10 minutes
- **Senior Infants** Up to 15 minutes
- **Rang 1** Up to 20 minutes
- **Rang 2** Up to 30 minutes
- **Rang 3** Up to 40 minutes
- **Rang 4** Up to 50 minutes
- **Rang 5** Up to 1 hour
- **Rang 6** Up to 1 hour 15 minutes

4) How much help should parents give?

- Parents should try to help their children with homework by:
 - Providing them with a suitable place and time to do their homework.
 - Preventing interruptions or distractions, like television or other children.
 - Encouraging neatness in presentation.
- Children should do written homework themselves and parents should only help when the child has difficulty.
- If a child has difficulty with homework, the parents should help the child to overcome the difficulty with further explanation or examples, but not by actually doing the homework for the child. In this case the parent should write a note to the teacher explaining the problem.
- Shared reading is not homework in the regular sense and it is simply meant to be an enjoyable exercise between parent and child. If it's not enjoyable, shared reading should not be done.

5) How often should parents monitor homework?

- Parents should check and sign a child's homework journal every evening.
- The pupil's journal is an important record of the child's homework. It is also a valuable means of communication between parents and teachers.
- Ideally, all written messages to your child's teacher should be put in the homework journal (additional pages available at the end of the journal).
- Please check that your child ticks each item of homework when completed.

- Letters to parents are folded and placed in the current day of the homework journal. Please check your child's journal for such notes on a regular basis.

6) How often do teachers monitor homework?

- Ideally, teachers like to check homework on a daily basis. However, with large class numbers, it is not always possible to check each child's homework journal every day.
- As children get older and learn to work independently, some items of homework are checked less often e.g. every second day, or once per week.
- Some items of homework (and classwork) may be checked by children themselves under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children.

7) When should parents communicate with the teachers about homework?

- When the child cannot do homework due to family circumstances.
- When the child cannot do homework because he cannot understand some aspect of it.
- If the time spent at homework is often longer than the recommended amount of time.

8) When should homework be done?

- Each family situation is different – both parents working, child minders, etc. Ideally, homework should be done soon after school, while your child is still fresh. However, some children need a break before starting homework.
- Homework should never be left until the morning time, before school.

Remember

If homework is a stressful experience between parent and child, something is wrong! This leads to poor learning, and defeats the whole purpose of the homework. Should this happen on a regular basis, please contact the class teacher.

Roles and Responsibilities

This plan was formulated by senior staff members, in consultation with the principal and members of the teaching staff. The Deputy Principal is responsible for its implementation and review.

Ratified by Board of Management, Oct. 21st 2007.

Reviewed April 2010