

Updated Homework Policy

Aims:

1. To foster independence, self-reliance, self-esteem, co-operation and responsibility.
2. To reinforce work covered in school.
3. To promote self-discipline as a life skill.
4. To help with retention of facts.
5. To provide a link between teacher and parent/guardian and to encourage parental involvement in their child's education.
6. To challenge children's ability and provide opportunities for creativity.

How often is homework given?

- Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, but not on Fridays. There are two exceptions:
 - If homework has been neglected during the week.
 - In senior classes some project work is undertaken at weekends.
- As part of "Mindful Tuesday" Initiative, pupils are not given homework on the second and last Tuesday of each month. Parents and children are encouraged on these evenings to participate in a family activity. See appendix.
- Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given "homework off" as a treat or as acknowledgement of some special occasion.
- Please note homework may sometimes be given during the week or at the weekend if a child has not completed homework, has not made an honest effort or has presented untidy work.

What is the content of homework?

- Ideally homework will contain a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and written tasks. The balance between the amounts of homework assigned to these different tasks may vary from day to day.
- 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 by listening to reading and items to be learned, ensuring this work is well done.

Duration of homework

The following are general 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.

- **Junior / Senior Infants 10-20 minutes.**
- **1st & 2nd Classes 20 – 30 minutes.**

- ***3rd & 4th Classes 30 – 40 minutes.***
- ***5th & 6th Classes 40 - 50 minutes.***

What is the role of the child?

- Children should enter homework accurately in the homework diary.
- They should ensure they take home relevant books and copies.
- They should complete assignments to the best of their ability.
- They should present written work neatly.
- Children should have their Homework Diary open to tick off work as it is completed.

What is the role of parents/guardians?

- To encourage a positive attitude towards homework in all subjects from an early age.
- To encourage their children to organise themselves for homework by having all books and materials to hand.
- To agree a suitable time for doing homework, taking into account age, the need for playtime, relaxation and family time.
- To provide a quiet place with a suitable work surface.
- To prevent interruptions such as T.V. or excessive noise from brothers/sisters/friends.
- To monitor/supervise internet usage if children have homework that requires the use of the internet.
- To ensure that their child has all the necessary books, homework diary, copies, pencils, mathematical equipment, P.E. clothes, etc., that will be needed for the next day.

How much help should parents give?

- Children should do written homework themselves and parents should only help when the child has difficulty.
- If a child has difficulty with homework, 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.

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.
- Please check that your child records his/her homework neatly in the correct page and 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.

How often do teachers monitor homework?

- Ideally teachers like to check homework and homework diaries on a daily basis. However with large class numbers it is not always possible to check each child's homework and homework diary 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 may be checked by children themselves under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children as it promotes responsibility and self-esteem.

When should parents communicate with the teachers about homework?

- When your child cannot do homework due to family circumstances.
- When your child cannot do homework after an honest attempt because she/he cannot understand some aspect.
- If the time being spent at homework is often longer than the recommended amount of time.

When should homework be done?

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

What happens when homework is not done?

- When homework is not done regularly the teacher contacts the parents with a view to resolving the situation.
- If the situation continues, then the matter is brought to the attention of the Principal who will contact the parent/guardian and arrange a meeting to discuss how the matter can be resolved.

Remember!

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

Where exceptional circumstances prevent the completion of homework, please forward an explanatory note to the teacher.

Ratified by Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management