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Homework Policy

Homework is an integral link in the chain of communication between school and home. Parents can monitor the progress of their children through continual reference to homework diaries and liaison with teachers.

Rationale

The need for homework/homework policy can be attributed to the following:

- To reinforce what the child learns during the day.
- To provide a link between teacher and parent
- To ensure clarity as to the recommended time to be spent on homework

Relationship to School Ethos:

It is the policy of the school to provide a positive learning experience which will stimulate each person to achieve his/her full potential. The school also encourages the active involvement of parents in enabling their child to take responsibility and work independently. The homework policy of the school facilitates these ideals.

Aims and Objectives:

The primary objectives of the policy are –

- To consolidate learning through reinforcement of class work
- To enable the children develop a sense of responsibility and independence
- To enhance self-esteem through the provision of work that each child is capable of doing – Homework is meant to be achievable by a child. However,

sometimes with senior classes, some homework is designed to challenge children's ability and provide opportunities for creativity.

- To develop concentration, self-discipline and study skills
- To promote consistency and a uniform approach to homework across all classes
- To further develop links between home and school

Policy Content:

It is school policy to assign appropriate class-related levels of homework as an important reinforcement in the learning process. Good study habits are fostered, independent learning is promoted and self-discipline is developed. The following are the allocations for our school.

1) 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
- 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.
- Please note extra homework may sometimes be given during the week or at the weekend if a child has not done homework, made a suitable effort or presented untidy work.

2) How much 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 - 15 minutes
Senior Infants	Up to 20 minutes
Rang 1	Up to 30 minutes
Rang 2	Up to 40 minutes
Rang 3	Up to 50 minutes
Rang 4	Up to 1 hour
Rang 5	1 hour
Rang 6	1 hour

3) **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 items to be learned ensuring this work is done well.
- The assigned homework is explained to the children in advance.
- The different ability levels of the pupils are taken into account
- The Learning Support/Resource teachers may give homework to their allocated pupils
- If homework causes stress or worry to the child, parents are encouraged to convey these anxieties to the class teacher. If homework cannot be completed on a particular night, parents are asked to forward a written note.

4) **Parental Involvement:**

- Parents should try to help their children with homework by:
 - ◆ providing them with a suitable place and time to do their homework
 - ◆ to prevent interruptions or distractions, like T.V. or other children
- 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.
- Parents should have a supply of rulers, pencils, erasers etc. available, should the need for them arise

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.
- Parents should check that their child records his/her homework neatly in the correct page and ticks each item of homework when completed.

5) Role of Teacher

- 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 class-work) may be checked by children themselves under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children.

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, parents are asked to contact the class teacher.