

## Introduction

Homework is part of a continuous learning process and in St. Canice's National School we regard homework as important for the following reasons:

- It allows pupils the opportunity to revisit, revise and consolidate skills learned in class.
- It can help pupils to make more rapid progress in learning.
- It can involve parents and family in the pupil's work, to their mutual benefit.
- It gives pupils an opportunity for independent learning and study.
- It forms a link with the methods of study crucial to success at secondary school and in later life.

It also enables the teacher:

- To monitor pupil progress with a view to improving standards.
- To provide pupils and parents with clear and relevant feedback.
- To suggest strategies for improvement and goals to be achieved.
- To seek extra resources to support those pupils in need of additional help or additional challenge.

## How often is homework given?

Homework is given Monday – Thursday.

- Homework is generally not given at weekends – however exceptions to this may include:
  - When homework is not completed during the week
  - When children are undertaking research for a project/art work etc.
  - However, pupils may be asked to complete unfinished work at weekends.
- Children may receive homework off, at the discretion of the Class Teacher/Principal or as an acknowledgement of some special occasion.

## What is the content of homework?

Usually homework will contain a balance between reading tasks, written tasks and learning

tasks. This balance is not always possible and may vary from day to day. However it should be noted that homework time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work.

- Depending on class level, homework may regularly contain reading, spellings, tables, written work, pieces to be “learned by heart”, drawing, colouring, collecting information, musical instrument practice 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 memorised in order to ensure that this work is done well.
- Children are encouraged to read for pleasure every day and parents are encouraged to read to younger children every day.

### **How much homework is given?**

The following are guidelines for time spent at homework. Children will complete the same homework in varying 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 rather than the quantity of homework that counts.

### **The following are general guidelines only:**

Junior & Senior Infants:	15 – 20 minutes
1st & 2nd Class:	20 – 30 minutes
3rd & 4th Class:	30 – 45 minutes
5th & 6th Class:	45 – 60 minutes

If children are unable to complete homework in this time it is advisable to arrange to meet the class teacher to discuss it.

### **Pupils should:**

- Enter homework accurately in homework diary or folder.
- Ensure they take home relevant books and copies.
- Complete the homework assignments to the best of their ability.
- Present written work neatly.
- Ensure they have all necessary books, homework journal, copies, pencils, mathematical equipment, dictionary etc. for the next school day.

### **Parents/Guardians should:**

- Encourage a positive attitude towards homework in all subjects from an early age.
- Encourage children to work independently as far as possible. Ideally children should be able to complete all homework as it will have been set at a level suitable to their ability. If the child is having difficulty you can help by providing further explanation or examples while not actually doing the homework for the child. Resist over helping.
- Encourage children to organise themselves for homework. Have all books, copies and materials to hand.
- Agree a suitable time for doing homework, taking into account age, need for playtime, relaxation and family time.
- Provide a quiet place, suitable work surface, free from distractions, interruptions, technology and TV.
- Encourage good presentation and neatness within a reasonable time.
- Listen to reading, spellings, tables, memorised work etc.
- Ensure that the child checks that they have all necessary books, homework journal, copies, pencils, mathematical equipment, dictionary etc. for the next school day.
- Ensure that the child checks that all homework is completed.
- Parents are expected to sign their child's diary every night.
- Each family situation is different and some children will complete homework with a childminder or at a Homework Club. In this case parents should still check with the child that all homework has been completed, sign the child's diary and, if possible, listen to the child read or recite a memorised piece of work.
- Communicate difficulties to the teacher if needs be. If you find that your child is spending too long on their homework or does not understand some aspect of it, ask them to stop and send a note to the class teacher explaining the difficulty.

### **Teachers should:**

- Set homework, review assignments and provide feedback to pupils.
- Monitor homework to help identify pupils with specific difficulties.

### **Teachers should not:**

- Ask children to copy large amount of text from books as a punishment.

### **How often do teachers monitor homework?**

- Ideally, teachers like to check homework and diary on a daily basis but with large classes this is not always possible. As children get older and learn to work more independently some items of work may be checked less often, every second day or once a week.
- Some items of homework (and class work) may be checked by the children themselves or their peers, under the guidance of the class teacher. This can be a useful learning experience for the children as they may see mistakes more clearly. It also promotes responsibility and self-esteem.

### **What happens when homework is not done?**

When homework is not completed, the child may have to do it that evening along with the current day's homework. The child may also be asked to complete the homework over the weekend. If homework is not completed on a regular basis, the teacher contacts parents with a view to resolving the situation. If the situation continues, then the matter is brought to the attention of the Deputy Principal/Principal.

### **When do teachers communicate with parents about homework?**

- Homework will be discussed at Parent/Teacher Meetings.
- If homework has not been completed to an acceptable standard – teacher may write a note in diary.
- Failure to do homework on a regular basis will be recorded and brought to the attention of Parents/Guardians as it is regarded as a breach of school rules.

### **When do parents communicate with teachers about homework?**

Generally homework will be discussed at Parent/Teacher Meetings. However there may be occasions when a parent/guardian needs to communicate outside of this e.g.

- If a child has been unable to complete homework due to family circumstances or illness.
- If a child, despite having made an honest attempt, was unable to complete homework because he/she cannot understand some aspect of it.

- If the amount of time being spent at homework is regularly significantly longer than the recommended time.

### **Homework and Learning Support**

Class Teachers and Learning Support/Resource Teachers will plan together when assigning homework to children

### **Remember**

If homework is a stressful experience between parent and child then 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.

### **Monitor, review and evaluation**

This policy will be monitored, reviewed and evaluated on an ongoing basis.

### **Communication**

The ratified policy will be circulated to Parents' Association and will be communicated to other members of the school community as appropriate. Copies of this policy are available from the school office.

### **Implementation Date**

This policy will apply from the date of ratification by the Board of Management.

### **Ratification**

This policy was read, discussed and approved/ratified by the Board of Management.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated:

Marguerite Ahearne