



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. This policy, attempts to further strengthen positive home-school links through streamlining the processes involved. The homework policy of Scoil Fhursa has been formulated by staff with parental input, and ratified by the Board of Management.

Rationale

The need to redraft and amend the homework policy of the school can be attributed to the following;

- Further strengthening of home-school links
- Reinforcing the learning experienced by the child during the school day
- Ensuring clarity as to the recommended time to be spent on homework

Relationship to School Ethos

Homework fosters independence, self-reliance, self-esteem, co-operation, responsibility and life-long learning. It is an essential part of primary education as it re-enforces what children learn in school. It provides a link between teacher and parent and encourages parental involvement in their child's education.

In general, homework is meant to be achievable by a child working on their own to the best of their ability. It is normally prepared by the teacher in class. It can be used to practice what is done in school or can be designed to challenge children's ability and provide opportunities for creativity.

- It is the policy of the school to, as far as is possible, identify all the needs of the pupil and put in place measures to adequately cater for their needs
- 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 a work menu that is doable

- To foster 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 –

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| • Infants | 0-20 minutes |
| • 1 st and 2 nd Class | 20-30 minutes |
| • 3 rd and 4 th Class | 30-40 minutes |
| • 5 th and 6 th Class | 40-60 minutes |

The list above refers to **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.

Points to Note:

- Homework is generally based on class related work or work already covered in class. It should contain a balance between reading, learning and writing. Time devoted to reading and learning is as important as written work
- The assigned homework is explained to children in advance. The different levels of the pupils are also taken into account
- Homework is given from Mondays to Thursdays and generally is not given at weekends unless it has been neglected during the week, or unless exceptional circumstances such as projects or book weeks occur
- Occasionally children are rewarded with reduced homework if they have worked or behaved well
- It is not school policy to issue homework as an exercise in isolation. It will in most instances be an integral part of the subject being taught and be consistent.
- The Learning Support Teachers will occasionally give homework to their allocated pupils but only as a reinforcement of class work. Reading is routinely given as homework and should be accorded priority consideration
- 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 to the class teacher
- Teachers will make every effort 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 a 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 as it promotes responsibility and independence

- All children have a homework diary. The homework diary acts as a means of communication between class teacher and parent
- "Homework off" may be given at the discretion of the Principal and Staff

Procedures for Parents

- Provide suitable comfortable facilities
- Remove distractions – T.V. younger siblings etc
- Help child overcome difficulties through explanation
- Parents should not do the homework for their children
- Send a note to the class teacher if a problem arises. This can be done through the homework diary
- Check and sign homework diaries
- Notify the class teacher if time spent on homework exceeds the recommended time
- As children tire towards late evening, encourage the completion of homework as early as possible
- Discourage morning homework

Roles and Responsibilities:

Pupils should:

- Enter homework accurately in homework diary
- Ensure they take home relevant books and copies
- Complete homework assignments to the best of their ability
- Present written work neatly.

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. Resist over-helping.
- Encourage children to organise themselves for homework. Have all books and materials to hand. The pupil should have the Homework Diary open to tick off work as it is completed.
- Agree a suitable time for doing homework, taking into account the age of pupil, the need for playtime, relaxation and family time.
- Provide a quiet place, suitable work surface, free from distraction, interruptions and T.V.
- Encourage good presentation and neatness within a reasonable time
- Sign the homework diary (Senior Infants to 6th classes) checking that all homework is complete.
- Check that the child has all necessary books, homework journal, copies, pencils, mathematical equipment, dictionary, P.E. clothes if needed, for the next school day.
- Communicate difficulties to the teacher using the homework journal

Teachers should:

- Set homework, review assignments and provide feed back to students
- Monitor homework to help identify pupils with special difficulties

- Meet with concerned parents to discuss and resolve issues pertaining to homework

Evaluation

- In-class corrections
- Checking homework diaries
- Parent – Teacher meetings
- Teacher designated tests
- Pupil profiling
- Teacher observation
- Feedback from parents and pupils
- General air of satisfaction

Roles and Responsibilities/Implementation

The entire school community (BoM, Principal, Staff, Parents and Pupils) have a role to play in the implementation of this policy.

This policy was reviewed in May, 2012

Ratification/Communication

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management and communicated to all parents.

Timetable for Review

This policy will be reviewed and if necessary, amended in September 2013.