

Whole Schools Policy on Homework

Introduction:

This policy is rooted in the Mission Statement and aims of the school, fostering in the student a spirit of self-reliance, independence, co-operation and responsibility and providing them with skills for life long learning.

Rationale:

Regular homework is a valuable aspect of the learning process and contributes to the development of sound study skills. It consolidates and supplements the work done in class and promotes independent learning and creativity.

Purpose:

At Scoil Mhuire gan Smal, we give homework for the following reasons:

- ❖ To reinforce what the child has learned during the day
- ❖ To provide a link between teacher and parent
- ❖ To develop the child's concentration skills and develop a work ethic

Homework is meant to be achievable by the child and to reinforce work already done. The teacher normally prepares it. However sometimes with senior classes, some homework is designed to challenge children's ability and provide opportunities for creativity. For instance senior classes can be given project work to research. Children are expected to do their homework to the best of their individual ability.

Homework is given on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, but not on Fridays, with the following exceptions:

- If homework has been neglected during the week
- Extra homework may be given during the week or at the weekend if the child has not completed their assigned homework, made a suitable effort or presented untidy work
- Sometimes, at the discretion of the class teacher or principal, children are excused from homework as an acknowledgement of some special occasion e.g. when child has earned a Homework Pass for excellent effort in schoolwork / behaviour.

Content:

Ideally, homework will contain a balance between reading tasks, learning tasks and written work. This balance is not always possible and can vary considerably from day to day.

However, it should be noted that homework 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 / Guardians can play an important role in listening to reading and items to be learned ensuring this work is done well.

We feel that parents must listen to their child reading aloud every night. Homework will be differentiated for children with individual learning needs.

Time Guidelines:

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 & Senior Inf.	up to 20 Mins
Rang 1 - 2	up to 30 Mins
Rang 3 - 4	up to 50 Mins
Rang 5 - 6	up to 1 hour 15 Mins

Parent /Guardian involvement:

Parents / Guardians can help their children with homework by providing them with a suitable place and time to do their homework and by trying to prevent interruptions or distractions, like TV or other children. Children should do written homework themselves and Parents /Guardians should only help when the child has difficulty.

If a child has difficulty with homework, the Parents/Guardians 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. Parents should encourage their children to read every night. They can read their class reader, shared reading book or library book. Older children can be encouraged to read the Daily Newspaper.

Shared Reading Programme:

Shared reading is done on blocks of time throughout the year. The class teacher will inform parents when this is the case. Parents are asked to spend 10- 15 minutes reading with their child in a quiet space where there are no interruptions.

Monitoring Homework at home:

Parents /Guardians should check that the homework is done in full and then sign a child's Homework Diary each evening. If homework is done outside of the home, it is still strongly advised that parents would check that everything is completed and sign accordingly. A standard school homework diary will be introduced from 1st to 6th class from September 2019. The pupil's homework diary is an important record of the child's homework. It is also a valuable means of communication between parents/Guardians and teachers. Please check that your child records homework neatly in the correct page and ticks each item of homework when completed.

Monitoring homework at school:

Ideally teachers like to check homework on a daily basis. As children get older and learn to work independently, sometimes under the direction of the teacher, children themselves may check some items of homework or class work. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children.

Communication about Homework:

Parents should inform his/her child's teacher when: - a child cannot do homework due to family circumstances or a child cannot do homework because she / he cannot understand some aspect. A note can be written in Homework Diary.

Doing Homework:

Each family situation is different but, ideally, homework should be done soon after school and before any screen time. Some children however, may need a break before starting homework. Nevertheless homework should never be left to a late hour.

Roles and Responsibilities.

- 1 Board of Management.**
 - To ensure policy is developed and evaluated regularly
 - To approve policy
 - To receive reports from Principal on implementation of policy

- 2 Principal/Deputy Principal**
 - To monitor the implementation of policy.

- 3 Staff**
 - To implement policy, review homework assignments and provide feedback to pupils

- 4 Parents are encouraged to:-**
 - Support school policy
 - Provide suitable conditions for homework
 - See that the suggested amount of time is spent on homework
 - Check and Sign the homework diary as necessary

- 5 Students are encouraged to:-**
 - Do homework and present it properly

This policy was reviewed at a staff meeting in March 2019