



Scoil Bhríde Straffan

Homework Policy

Introduction

Home and school are two different but closely related aspects of children's lives. Frequently, these blur into one another as in the case of homework which is the most regular link between home and school. Homework is, therefore, an ideal opportunity to foster an educational partnership between home and school.

This policy, devised by teachers in consultation with parents/guardians and approved by the Board of Management is intended to maximise the benefit to children of time spent on homework. It details reasons for homework, types of homework that may be given to children at different stages, recommendations on time to be spent on homework, advice on conditions that should be available to the child for doing homework and what to do if problems arise.

Rationale

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

- Continue to promote positive home/school communication
- Maximise the benefits of homework to the children's learning
- Update our practices in light of parental, pupil and staff views on homework
- Ensure clarity and consistency on homework content, how it is assigned and the amount of time that should be spent on it

Relationship to School Ethos

Scoil Bhríde is an inclusive school catering for the individual needs of every child so they can reach their 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

By updating our homework policy and practice, Scoil Bhríde aims to;

- To consolidate learning through reinforcement of class work
- To enable the children develop life skills including a sense of responsibility and independence, self discipline, work ethic and self discipline
- To promote consistency and a uniform approach to homework across all classes which will allow children to benefit fully from the homework experience
- To further develop links between home and school and to encourage parental involvement in their child's education
- To develop and encourage a positive experience of homework
- To ensure that homework is meaningful and valuable to a child's learning and development

Types of Homework

Because homework is related to school work it is part of a carefully devised learning programme. It usually consists of a combination of reading, written and oral work. Oral work may include tasks such as learning tables, learning spellings, poetry and learning off facts. Written work may include work from a variety of subjects such as language, mathematics, history/geography, and religion or project based work. However, the type and amount of homework given will vary depending on the class of the child and on the differentiated need

Infants

It is essential to the child's educational development that the work done in school is reinforced regularly at home. In Infant classes, homework consists of letter/word or number recognition, sound practice, basic literacy including sounding out of words and blending, reading or worksheets to be completed. Homework in the infant classes is assigned via letter and folders at the beginning of the week and written pieces are collected and corrected at the end of the week.

First to Sixth Class

Homework set for these classes will have been prepared in school based on work covered in school and will take into account the individual learning needs of the children. Therefore, the child should be capable of completing much of his home exercise independently.

Certain aspects of the work may be unfamiliar to the parent/guardian such as methods used in Mathematics or aspects of the Gaeilge programme. Parents are encouraged to refer to the NCCA website <https://ncca.ie/en/primary/resources-for-parents/> where there are resources available to help them support their child.

It is important to hear children read every day, to discuss the text and pictures with them and to question them on the piece read. Oral homework is just as important as written work. Your teacher may need you to examine your child in such areas as tables, reading, spellings or poetry to see that it has been properly learnt. Memorisation is an important aspect of homework that is sometimes neglected and should include tables, poetry, English and Irish spelling as given. Revision of previous work is important.

Homework is assigned in each of these classes in physical format and communicated through homework journals/ letters to parents. It may also be assigned by the class teacher in line with our Digital Learning Policy, via SeeSaw.

If for some practical reason, homework cannot be completed on a particular night, please forward a note to the teacher. Each child has a Homework Journal and this should be checked to see if all work is completed and then signed. If there is any problem, a note can be written to the teacher.

In Sixth Class, the final class of the primary school, great importance attaches to homework and to the child's general work habits. In this class there should be an emphasis on co-ordination and order in the approach to homework. Attention should be paid to neatness of presentation in all work. Date, numbering, lay-out, etc. are important. At this stage the child should have developed a pride in their work and good study habits and we strive to encourage this mindset.

Time to be spent on Homework

The issue of how much time a child should spend on homework is difficult to specify exactly in that it depends on a number of factors including:

- the child's age.
- the child's learning ability.

- the child's level of concentration.
- the time of day/night that homework is undertaken.
- home factors such as distractions, demands of younger children, etc.

The following times are suggested as a guide for parents or guardians:

Infants: 10 - 20 minutes

First/Second: 20 - 30 minutes

Third/Fourth: 30 - 40 minutes

Fifth/Sixth: 50 - 60 minutes

Teachers will check with children and parents at regular intervals to ensure that time spent on homework is in line with these guidelines.

It is the school's policy that should you choose to take your child out of school during the school term to go on holidays, the class teachers will not be assigning specific work for your child/ children. The onus is on the parents to cover the work missed.

Children with Additional Needs

Children who attend support with the Special Education Teachers will be assigned differentiated homework in line with their Support Plan. Such differentiated homework will be given so the child's learning targets can be supported. Both the Special Education Teacher and Class Teacher will check the homework set.

How much help should parents provide?

- 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 excessive noise/interruptions from brothers/sisters/friends (children)
- 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.
- Most of the school correspondence is via the School APP but occasionally the class teacher may send home a paper note. These 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 the children's homework journal on a daily basis. However with large class numbers it is not always possible to check each child's homework and homework journal every day.
- Where homework is not completed or completed incorrectly teachers should identify issues and give additional support where necessary and/or appropriate.
- 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 classwork) may be checked by children themselves under the direction of the teacher. This can be a useful part of the learning process for children.

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.
- If there are personal circumstances that are impacting negatively on your child's opportunity to complete homework to his/her best potential

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.

Sanctions

- As Homework is compulsory, pupils who do not complete their homework without an explanation from parents/ guardians will be liable to sanctions outlined in the School's Code of Behaviour (See Code of Behaviour Policy)

Success Criteria

The success criteria of this policy will be determined by feedback from parents, pupils and teachers. This will be sought at Parent/Teacher Meetings during the first term and at regular intervals throughout the school year. In general where pupils are handing in satisfactory exercises and assignments, reading and memorizing activities are well practiced, this will be interpreted as reflecting positively on this policy. Similarly where the results of the regular class assignments are satisfactory this will also reflect positively on this policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers:

- The class teacher assigns homework, taking into consideration the recommended time allocation for homework and monitors it at regular intervals through feedback from parents and students.

- The class teacher ensures that homework is relevant and meaningful and differentiated when necessary to cater for individual learning needs of the students.
- The Special Education Teacher assigns homework to the children in their support in collaboration with the Class Teacher and in line with their Support Plan.
- The class teacher and/ or Special Education Teacher will work with parents and children to help to create a positive homework experience should difficulties arise.

Pupils

- The pupils (1st-6th) are responsible for writing homework in their homework journal and taking home all the necessary books, copies and equipment necessary to complete the homework.
- Return homework on time.
- Complete homework to the best of their ability.
- Recognise that not all homework learning will include writing but that oral work, reading, practical tasks and study tasks are equally as important.

Parents

- Parents are responsible for providing a suitable place, free of distractions, for their child to do their homework. They are also responsible for monitoring the homework process at home and ensuring that all homework is complete to the best of the child's ability.
- Parents should praise the child/ children for completing homework.
- If frustrations arise, take a break and complete at a later stage. Parents should try to familiarise themselves with homework assignments to help if required.
- Parents are responsible for communicating to the class teacher by a note through the journal when difficulties arise. The class teacher should communicate to the parent in return and offer guidance on the difficulty raised.

Principal

- The Principal is responsible for the implementation of this policy and for its review.

